

MAR 15 1950

# America

March 18, 1950

Vol. 82, Number 24

NATIONAL CATHOLIC WEEKLY REVIEW

"SO LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE . . . "

The Public Forum

## My debate with Mr. Blanshard

*We shall not all meet Mr. Blanshard; we shall all meet his arguments*

ROBERT C. HARTNETT, S.J.

In Private Life

## It's easier to carp than to cooperate

*A layman examines his conscience on missed opportunities*

DAVID VINCENT SHEEHAN

## The uninformed good Catholic

*He walks by his light; more cannot always be expected*

JOHN CLEARY

## How I became a convinced Catholic

*Opposition can serve to deepen one's faith*

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AMERICA. Published weekly by the America Press, 70 East 45th Street, New York 17, N. Y. March 18, 1950, Vol. LXXXII, No. 24. Whole No. 2131. Telephone MUrray Hill 6-5750. Cable address: Cathreview. Domestic, yearly \$6; 15 cents a copy. Canada, \$7; 17 cents a copy. Foreign, \$7.50; 20 cents a copy. Entered as second-class matter, April 15, 1909, at the Post Office at New York, under act of Mar. 3, 1879. AMERICA, National Catholic Weekly Review. Registered U.S. Patent Office.



### Mr. Barden's "selective indignation"

Rep. Graham A. Barden (D., N.C.) is back at the old stand where he completely blocked Federal aid to education last summer. As guest-speaker at a luncheon held at the Statler Hotel in New York City by the Committee on Federal Aid to Public Education on March 6, Mr. Barden raised the Blanshard-Oxnam cry about the "authoritarianism" of the Roman Catholic hierarchy. "Let there be no question," he declared, "as to who injected the religious issue into the Federal school aid problem." There never has been any question, Mr. Barden. *You did*. You were not satisfied with the carefully worked-out Thomas bill, passed by the Senate last spring. You went far out of your way to write into your Barden bill the anti-Catholic prejudices of the Scottish Rite Masons, Southern jurisdiction, long publicized in their periodical, the *New Age*. You went right down the line with Protestants and Other Americans United, with the National Educational Association and with every other pressure-group which has attacked the parochial schools as "un-American," "divisive," "authoritarian." Now you have the brass to charge the Catholic hierarchy with "name-calling." Moreover, you wrote anti-Negro provisions into your bill by eliminating the requirement, carefully worked out in the Thomas bill, that no State could qualify for Federal aid unless it extended educational opportunities to minority racial groups on a par with those extended to whites. How does it happen that your colleague, Eleanor Roosevelt, who is otherwise such a staunch defender of the rights of Negroes, remained silent on your racist prejudice when she spoke at the same luncheon? Doesn't she realize that A. Philip Randolph, International President of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, and William Green, President of the AFL, have both stigmatized your bill as anti-Negro and anti-Catholic? You know very well that you and your side-kick, Rep. Tom Steed from segregationist Oklahoma, are sabotaging Federal aid to education by your discriminatory tactics.

### American freedom and NEA power

The joker in this Blanshard-Oxnam-Barden-NEA-Masonic crusade for "separation of Church and State" is that it is made in the name of "democracy." The Catholic hierarchy is "authoritarian." What about the NEA? We are getting letters from public-school teachers which prove that superintendents and principals of schools are using *economic coercion* to force teachers to join the NEA. Here is the way NEA's "democracy" works. The teacher (in this case from the Mississippi Valley region) receives a letter from her superintendent "reminding" her that she has not joined the NEA. The teacher, taking the public-school's emphasis on democracy at face value, exercises her right to remain outside an organization in whose secularist, public-school-monopoly ideology she does not believe. Then the superintendent writes to ask the teacher to explain *why* she has not joined the NEA. She can tell him only at her own risk. In one school system the superintendent advises the teacher that membership dues in State, local and national associations (the NEA being the national) will be automatically de-

## CURRENT COMMENT

ducted from her first salary check. She is asked to sign a statement "agreeing" to this arrangement. An older NEA watchdog is put to work on her to get her to "agree." She can withstand this pressure only at the price of getting in the "bad book" of her boss. The American Federation of Teachers (AFL) sent out a bulletin to its members some months ago alerting them to such NEA tactics (AM. 12/3/49, p. 372). If NEA's national officers condemn this highjacking, as they say they do, let them take effective measures to stop it. Otherwise their "democratic" pose is a fake.

### Mr. Fine's propaganda reporting

On several occasions we have called attention to the way Benjamin Fine, education editor of the *New York Times*, distorts his reporting to fit the NEA party-line. A prize example of this was his March 1 story filed from Atlantic City, where the American Association of School Administrators was holding its annual convention. The *Times*' account ran this subhead, based on the dispatch: "Leading Educators, 7000-2, Ask Federal Funds Only for Public Institutions." The facts are these: 1) there were only 2,000 people in the hall when the vote was taken; 2) they voted on 19 resolutions in a "package," never on the Federal-aid resolution taken by itself; 3) the "vote" was a voice vote, with no balloting, no counting of votes. Dr. James Hanley, Superintendent of Public Schools in Providence, R. I., a member of the 27-man Resolution Committee, deserves credit for objecting to the Federal-aid resolution because it condemned the practices of sixteen States which already permit the use of public funds for bus rides to nonpublic schools.

### Federal aid in committee

The log-jam in the House Committee on Labor and Education last week reached a point where it might break any day, possibly in favor of the Senate bill. Up to last week no group was capable of rallying a majority of 13 out of the 25 votes needed to report out a bill. The Republican minority of 9 has been mostly unfavorable to any Federal aid. The Democratic majority of 16 was split three ways: the die-hard Bardenites (3-4 members) insisted on ruling out bus rides to nonpublic-school children in their bill; several members insisted on exactly the opposite; others were willing to go along with the Senate bill leaving this question to the States. If the Bardenites would join the last-named group they might

well muster a majority, but Mr. Barden is not *that* interested in Federal aid. On March 1 the Committee turned down his bill, 15-9. On March 7, by a vote of 16-9, it turned down Rep. John F. Kennedy's (D., Mass.) amendment looking to "a just and workable solution" (AM., 1/21, p. 468). Voting with Mr. Kennedy were Reps. Bailey (D., W. Va.), Brehm (R., Ohio), Burke (D., Ohio), Irving (D., Mo.), Kelley (D., Penna.), Lesinski (D., Mich.), Lucas (D., Texas), and Morton (R., Ky.). Northern Republicans held the power to turn the decision any way they wanted.

### Capitol lobbies spend nearly \$8 million

In the *Congressional Record* for February 27 (Appendix, pp. A1505ff) appears a list of lobbies in Washington with the amounts expended by each during 1949. Among the top spenders are these:

American Medical Association.....	\$1,522,683
Committee for Constitutional Govt.....	620,632
(see p. 688 of this issue for tie-up of CCG with other groups)	
National Association of Electric Co.'s....	388,883
Association of American Railroads.....	194,159
National Small Business Men's Assn....	192,070
National Milk Producers Federation....	178,171
National Assn. of Real Estate Boards....	138,600

The AMA, which spent more than any other lobby, is fighting not only compulsory health insurance but also the establishment of a Department of Welfare. The real-estate lobby fights all housing legislation which it believes to be in any way an "invasion" of private real-estate operations. Religious and educational lobbies and the amounts expended by each included:

Friends Committee on National Legislation	\$38,969
American Parents Committee.....	18,033
National Education Association.....	17,188
(estimated part of \$57,890 annual budget devoted to legislative work)	
National Catholic Welfare Conference....	15,252
American Association of University Women	4,132

The NCWC, which is alleged to be a "threat" to American freedom, operates on an extremely modest budget. Unreported in this listing, which came originally from the *Congressional Quarterly* News Features, are legislative "lobbies" conducted by Federal agencies themselves. Dr. Robert L. Johnson, national chairman of the Citizens Committee for the Hoover Report, has charged that they employ 3,800 full-time public-relations and

publicity workers. He accuses them of trying to torpedo the acceptance of Hoover Commission reforms.

### End the Chrysler strike

So far as we can see there is only one substantial issue in the Chrysler strike. The United Auto Workers insists that the corporation set up an actuarially sound pension system for its employees. The corporation adamantly refuses to do so. In full-page advertisements it recently argued that by reason of its resources and business success its mere promise to pay pensions is security enough. About the size of the pensions and the criteria for eligibility there appears to be no disagreement serious enough to prevent a settlement. If we may judge from public statements of corporation officials, Chrysler refuses to establish a pension fund because it suspects that the union wants to get its hands on it. Since even the Taft-Hartley Act concedes the union a joint voice with management in the administration of pension funds, that argument is worthless. Very likely the real reason for the company's insistence on a pay-as-you-go system is that it is cheaper than a funded plan. If the savings on this score were essential to the financial well-being of the corporation, one might be able to justify the refusal of Chrysler to give its employees the security which comes from an actuarially sound system. The very arguments which the company uses to defend its pay-as-you-go offer, however, show that this is not so. Chrysler can well afford to fund its pension liability. Many companies, less well heeled, are already doing so. Under the circumstances we wonder how this rich and powerful corporation can justify a stand which has resulted in a strike, now seven weeks old, and severe economic hardship to hundreds of thousands of people.

### Status of DP legislation

Handsome Senate Majority Leader Scott W. Lucas was plainly mad by midafternoon of March 7. "I think very definitely that there is a filibuster on this bill and that this performance is an indication of it." The bill is the proposal to liberalize the Displaced Persons Act of 1948. The "performance" was the successful, though unexpected, motion for an overnight recess made by Senator William Langer (R., N.D.). While victims of Europe's tragedy subsist on IRO rations (at 35c a day), Congress has been brooding about America's responsibility toward them. Last June the House of Representatives passed liberalizing legislation known as the Celler Bill (HR 4567). After interminable delays the Senate Judiciary Committee reported out on January 23 a version of HR 4567 so badly mangled that an actual majority of the Committee in effect disowned it, giving it their votes only to ensure Senate consideration. On February 27 eighteen Senators—ten Democrats and eight Republicans—offered a substitute proposal which they hope to have enacted as amendments to the Committee's bill. Identified with the names of Senators Kilgore, Graham and Ferguson, the substitute measure 1) allows 339,000 DP's to enter the country on our legally established immigration quotas by June 30, 1951, 2) removes previous restric-

AMERICA—National Catholic Weekly Review—Edited and published by the following Jesuit Fathers of the United States:

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Editorial Office: 329 W. 108TH STREET, NEW YORK, 25, N. Y.

Business Office: 70 EAST 45TH STREET, NEW YORK 17, N. Y.  
Business Manager and Treasurer: JOSEPH C. MULHERN  
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tions connected with ethnic origin and agricultural occupation, 3) defines DP's as those who on January 1, 1949 were under supervision by the International Refugee Organization (thus protecting refugees from communism), 4) makes heartening provision for orphans, Russian refugees driven out of China, Polish Army exiles and homeless Greeks, 5) allocates half (54,744) of our regular accumulated German immigration quota to Volksdeutsche—the 8 million Germans expelled from Soviet-dominated regions, 6) provides an RFC loan to agencies to finance inland transportation of the DP's, 7) extends the life of the Displaced Persons Commission to June 30, 1952 and 8) adequately protects America against Communist infiltration by immigrants. This substitute bill is backed by the Catholic, Protestant and Jewish agencies that have sponsored 87 per cent of the 110,000 DP's who have already entered the United States. It is the measure that will begin to acquit America of its obligation in charity to Europe's homeless.

### ***The machinery of the "confession" mills***

The technique of extorting the "confessions" of Cardinal Mindszenty, the Bulgarian pastors and the American businessman, Robert Vogeler, is, in the judgment of our State Department, now known. On March 4 the Department released to the press a dramatic, 8,000-word affidavit signed by Michael Shipkov, former translator at our Sofia Legation, detailing his experiences at the hands of the Bulgarian State Security Militia after his arrest last August 20. After thirty-two hours of unrelenting psychological terror, Shipkov made the required "confession," acknowledging that he had organized espionage on the orders of the American Minister. He readily agreed to return to the Legation to work as a Communist spy, but instead found courage enough to report in writing his treatment at the hands of the secret police. Shipkov found refuge in our Legation. One winter morning he was "missing." With the publication on February 21 of the Bulgarian Public Prosecutor's indictment revealing that Shipkov was turned over to the "Sofia County Court to be tried, to be found guilty and punished," the American Government published the affidavit as his last will and testament. The affidavit manifests the seeds of despair infecting everyone behind the Iron Curtain, the memories of friends and loved ones suddenly seized by the police and never heard from again. On his arrest, Shipkov was abruptly informed he was merely to complete the official knowledge of his guilt by a full confession and repentance. Teams of "stern, serious and incredibly earnest" young police officials, working implacably in relays, plentifully supplied with details on his family and friends, questioned him without pause. Leaning against a wall, supported only by his two outstretched fingers, convinced of the hopelessness of outside aid, Shipkov broke under the barrage of questions. It is remarkable the way a character like Shipkov can be broken down, can recover to tell how he was broken down, and can then be disintegrated again to testify in court, as Shipkov did on March 6, to the "humaneness" of his jailers and to repudiate his torture story.

### ***Landmark in the new Japan***

The appointment on March 3 of Dr. Kotaro Tanaka as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Japan was a landmark in the progress of both Catholicism and democracy in the new Japan. Dr. Tanaka is not only a Catholic (he was baptized into the faith in 1926) but a Catholic intellectual of the first rank, deeply versed in Catholic philosophy, theology, history and culture. He took his law degree and his doctorate at Tokyo Imperial University, where he became professor of law in 1929 and Dean of the Faculty of Law in 1937. In the first Yoshida cabinet (1946-47) Dr. Tanaka was Minister of Education, and when the first post-surrender election was held in April of 1947 he won a seat in the House of Councillors. This he has now resigned to become Chief Justice. To the judiciary Dr. Tanaka brings a brilliant background as jurist, teacher and writer; as student and lecturer on jurisprudence in Europe, the United States and South and Central America; as an experienced politician of independent judgment, and as an uncompromising foe of the militarists of pre-surrender days and of the Communists and other extreme leftists today. It is noteworthy that the comments in the Japanese press on Dr. Tanaka's appointment have uniformly emphasized his "devout Catholicism" and the "happy choice [as Chief Justice] which augurs the sound growth and development of the judiciary into a strong pillar of Japan's new democratic society." AMERICA is proud to number Dr. Tanaka among its contributors. In the issue of July 3, 1948 we published his article on the moral forces and outlook needed for the reconstruction of Japan, "Postwar Japan builds for peace."

### ***American "primitives" and Eastern culture***

Twenty-five students, selected from among thousands of boys and girls in the Middle East and in Southeast Asia, took part in the New York *Herald Tribune's* fifth annual High School Forum, March 4, 1950. These Oriental youths won American hearts by their equally frank expressions of admiration and puzzlement about "the American way" of life. About our custom of "dating" between boys and girls, for example, Malaival Moj dara, girl delegate from Thailand, exclaimed:

Look, here in America you start dating when you are fifteen. . . . You say that you have dates because you must know the other person well before you get married. Why, if this is so, do you get divorced after a year or two of married life, regardless of how long you knew each other before?

To which "Raj" (Chitaran Felix Amerasinghe), delegate from Ceylon, added:

Divorce was unheard of in the East before Western imperialism. Even today it is a rare phenomenon. In America it sometimes seems that divorce is the rule and happy married life the exception. This may be due to the lack of spiritual and moral training. "Raj" found that the home life of America seemed a bit like "mad scurrying," and that the family tie was not so strong as in the East. It is worth reminding our American "sex anarchists" (AM. 2/25, pp. 603-604) that Russian delegates to the United Nations have also ex-

pressed amazement at the laxity of sex morals among American youth. As in the case of our racial discrimination, our low sex standards scandalize peoples on whose cultures we look down, because they do not provide "liberal" sex instruction and similarly "advanced" instruction in other subjects in luxurious temples of learning open to all without tuition. But they regard us as the real "primitives." To some degree they are right.

### ***An Islamic-Christian front in the making***

Egypt is the undisputed spiritual and cultural leader of Islam. Cairo's famed thousand-year-old Al Azhar University is the most celebrated institution of learning in the Moslem world. It draws its students from wherever there are followers of the Prophet and has molded a traditional Moslem anti-Christian mentality for centuries. Out of Cairo two weeks ago came indications that antipathy toward Christianity was finally breaking down. The reason for this shift was communism's threat to world peace and the occasion was the sending out of feelers from the Vatican on the possibility of an Islamic-Christian united front to resist the advance of communism. A conference of Egyptian diplomatic representatives announced that it had seriously considered the question of Islamic cooperation with Christians. That discussions concerning an East-West rapprochement should take place in Cairo is not strange. Though Egypt stands at the threshold of the Orient, Hussein Sirry Pasha, chief of the Royal Cabinet, has stated that Egypt belongs to the European world. The Wafd party, now in control of the Egyptian Parliament, makes no secret of its pro-Western sentiments. What is remarkable is that the discussions should have concerned a meeting of minds with the West with religious ideals as the basis. Islam of its very nature is aggressively intolerant of other faiths. For this reason the undertones of the conference in Cairo are significant. Moslem leaders apparently seriously consider Rome as the one solid bulwark capable of hindering the further spread of communism. They also seem to feel that there is room for cooperation among those whose only religious common denominator is belief in a way of life based on faith in God. The last admission does violence to the Moslem creed. Cooperation in the struggle against communism may yet mean the disappearance of thirteen centuries of Moslem antagonism to Christianity.

### ***Next steps on slave labor***

Russia and her satellites hardly bother any more to conceal the extent to which their economies rely on slave labor. Startlingly detailed new evidence of slave labor was provided on February 27 by Miss Toni Sender of the American Federation of Labor. She laid before the UN Economic and Social Council facts to disprove Russia's earlier subterfuge that only "criminals" were in "corrective" camps. On March 2 a blast was leveled at the United States before the same UN committee. Strange to say, it did not come from the Red bloc, but from the U. S. Commission of Inquiry into Forced Labor, a non-governmental organization with consultative status in the Council. The charge was that the U. S. "tolerated" forced

labor and, in some instances, outright slavery, mainly among migrant workers of Negro and Mexican origin. On March 6 the Economic and Security Council voted to set up a committee of experts to send a questionnaire on slavery to both member and non-member nations, but refused to go into the question of slave labor. Three conclusions have to be drawn. First, the Council's decision was "weasely." The distinction between slavery and slave or forced labor is in the concrete a distinction without a difference. Secondly, whatever be the motives behind the charges of the U. S. Commission of Inquiry into Forced Labor, its charges should get immediate investigation by our Government. Remedies must be applied and made known to the world. Thirdly, Miss Sender's suggestion that the UN Economic and Social Council cooperate with the International Labor Office to gather and publicize the facts on forced labor throughout the world should win the fervent backing of the United States. The disgrace of human slavery, whether at home or abroad, can be exposed, with or without Russian cooperation. The fact that the UN supports a specific Declaration of Human Rights defies us to ignore that disgrace anywhere.

### ***Fee-splitting is a sin***

If only as evidence that Spaniards have problems other than politics we note the question bothering some doctors in Valencia recently. What was the correct moral appraisal, these physicians asked their Archbishop, Marcelino Olaechea, of the practice of taking commissions from specialists to whom they had referred their patients? The Archbishop had no hesitation in labeling all forms of fee-splitting "morally illicit" and "at least a venial sin." Such commissions, over and above regular fees, are payments for no real service rendered the patient and, hence, are a form of stealing from him. More reprehensible still, the practice of fee-splitting deprives the patient of the most competent consultation available, since a conspiracy between doctors to split fees looks not to professional talent but commercial gain. Organized medicine is traditionally adamant against the practice. In England the General Medical Council brands fee-splitting (known there as "dichotomy") as "infamous conduct," punishable with erasure from the medical register. The AMA's *Principles of Medical Ethics* declare:

When a patient is referred by one physician to another for consultation or for treatment, whether the physician in charge accompanies the patient or not, it is unethical to give or to receive a commission by whatever term it may be called or under any guise or pretext whatsoever.

The American College of Surgeons is equally severe in its condemnation. Yet the practice is admittedly widespread. The difficulty of policing a profession is undeniably formidable: such unethical transactions always spring from private arrangements between doctors. Does organized medicine feel, however, that it has done all it can to implement its efforts to stamp out fee-splitting? Members of Catholic Physicians' Guilds have an advantage in discussions of the problem. They understand the sanction of sin suggested by Archbishop Olaechea.

## WASHINGTON FRONT

It seems very likely that both the 80th and the 81st will go down in history as the "schizophrenic" Congresses. Every Congress, under a two-party system, has of course a dual personality, in a sense. There were deep cleavages in the Jefferson-Hamilton-Madison-Adams-Monroe era, and, not so long after, in the Calhoun-Clay-Webster-Jackson era; and, in our times, in the T. Roosevelt-Taft-Bryan-La Follette-Wilson imbroglio. But none of those great periods in our history was quite like our own.

It has suddenly become the fashion of commentators to explain current events as exhibiting something new: a clash of "ideologies"—Fair Deal vs. anti-Fair Deal. But Jefferson had an ideology, as did Calhoun, Roosevelt, Bryan and Wilson.

All of those great men and their followers were quite clear in their own minds about where they stood and how they would vote. They rarely, if ever, voted on both sides of the same fundamental question. In these last two Congresses, nothing is more common than that very thing. That is why I call them schizophrenic.

The fundamental issue of the day, of course, is the extent to which the Federal Government may and should go in forwarding the general welfare of the community; and a subsidiary—and immediately necessary—issue is how far such support, if any, should mean also control. That makes four possible main positions which a member of Congress can take: support-control; support-no control; no support; no control. The shades of difference in between are merely a matter of degree.

Now I have not kept a score on the votes of members of Congress. But certainly the general picture justifies the conclusion that practically every member has taken, or before this session is over will take, a stand somewhere among these four main positions. Moreover, he may even take contradictory positions on different issues.

One good example is the farm price-support program. The picture of the Government holding nearly \$4 billion worth of unmarketable commodities, which it took off the market to keep food and fiber prices high, and of the Commodity Credit Corporation saying that \$2 billion more will be necessary this year to carry out the wishes of Congress, is appalling. Yet all this does not seem to worry a large number who will balk at lesser sums for urban housing, social security and the like. Of course, the farm program originates with the Congress, while the urban welfare programs come from the Executive.

And when it comes to Federal control—the farmers are the most regimented of all our citizens, and they love it. They already have acreage control and will have to accept marketing quotas. In comparison, the city welfare programs are less wasteful, are mostly self-supporting, and are mostly operated by local authorities. No wonder any given Congressman may vote all four ways at once.

WILFRID PARSONS

## UNDERSCORINGS

A group of Catholics has been urging Doubleday and Co. to publish pocket-book editions of Catholic authors. The company is not averse to the idea, but would like to be sure about the market. Tangible evidence of Catholic interest, say by letters and suggestions for titles, would help. Address Walter O'Keefe, Institutional Department, Doubleday and Co., Garden City, N. Y.

► Drought-ridden New York City has called upon Fordham University's Professor of Physics, Dr. Victor F. Hess, to join the six-man committee appointed to study artificial means of producing the rain that the city's reservoirs are thirsty for. Awarded the Nobel Prize in 1936 for his discovery of cosmic rays, Dr. Hess has held his present professorship since 1938. He is the author of works on the conductivity and the ionization balance of the atmosphere.

► *Zapreshchayetsya* (pronounced "zapreshchayetsya") is the Russian equivalent of the English policeman's traditional "You can't do that there 'ere." Ripley's "Believe It or Not" recently featured an impressive list of the things that would bring a stiff "Zap . . . etc." upon you from a Russian cop. Such as, for instance, ringing church bells, being friendly with foreigners, staying away from work and other unsocial activities. St. John's Post, No. 1311, Catholic War Veterans, Noroton, Conn., is distributing reprints in a handy card form.

► On February 24, the faculty and students of Jesuit High School, New Orleans, sprang a surprise celebration upon G. Gernon Brown, teacher and coach, in honor of his twenty-five years of service at the school. A 1950 Mercury sedan, a television set and a wrist watch were among the tokens of appreciation Mr. Brown received. His football teams have chalked up six city and five State championships; his basketball teams led the city ten times and the State eleven times.

► A correspondent writes us about the "dire need" of books for the library of a Catholic mission for Negroes in Mississippi. Rev. Paul Frichl, C.S.J., St. Joseph's Catholic Mission, Holly Springs, Miss., would be grateful for any assistance in this line that readers can extend to him.

► St. Louis University, in cooperation with Fontbonne College (St. Louis) announces a program of Home Economics Education, leading to a Master of Education degree, to be offered beginning June 20, 1950. St. Louis is the first Catholic university to offer a graduate degree in this field. Planned at the insistence of superiors of religious orders and of members of the National Catholic Council on Home Economics, the program aims at giving a Catholic background to teachers of courses in home economics and family life. Fontbonne College, one of the Corporate Colleges of St. Louis University, is under the direction of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet.

C. K.



## France half-alive

"I wonder," exclaimed Edouard Herriot, elder statesman of France, as he watched the Communist deputies rioting in the Chamber on March 4, "if this isn't the end of Parliament."

For some time now many American friends of France have been wondering the same thing. Some of them might go even further than M. Herriot. After watching the French ship of state wallow in one crisis after another, they are beginning to doubt whether it will ever again sail on an even keel.

From the end of the war in Europe it was obvious that the French would have to travel a hard road to recovery. The crushing defeat of 1940, the long occupation, the physical destruction, the fratricidal strife between Pétainist and de Gaullist forces left scars that would not readily heal. By a kind of fiction France was rated a great Power in the United Nations. In reality, she was sick unto death. By 1947, the full extent of French disintegration could no longer be disguised. All over Europe the story went the rounds that Stalin could take Paris with a telephone call. The call would go to M. Duclos or M. Thorez, the leading figures in the French Communist Party.

At this critical juncture the United States, awake at last to the deadly threat from Moscow, went reluctantly to the rescue. No one can say with certainty, of course, that only the Marshall Plan saved France from communism, but some very well-informed observers believe this to be true. Under the stimulus of American dollars, the Third Republic made an astonishing economic comeback. Within two years her level of industrial production was higher than pre-war. American confidence in France began to grow. It increased when the so-called "Third Force" coalition mustered the courage to expel the Communists from the Government, and then smashed the political strikes ordered by the Cominform against the Marshall Plan. Early last year, American observers dared to hope that France might yet recover her status as a great Power.

As the months have passed, that hope has almost vanished. The reasons for this decline in optimism are not hard to find.

Though the over-all figures on agricultural and industrial production are heartening, closer inspection reveals serious maladjustments. The people of France have not benefited equally from her economic recovery. More specifically, the wage earners have received a raw deal. The Government, confronted with the solid opposition of farmers and businessmen, has never really come to grips with inflation. Taxes which should have been imposed were not imposed. Prices have been allowed to spiral upward. The workers, trying to make ends meet on frozen wage levels, have suffered grievously. The Communists, who had lost ground after the failure of their political strikes, have consequently managed to retain their hold on the powerful Confederation of Labor.

Furthermore, economic recovery has not promoted political stability. On the contrary, as material condi-

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tions have improved, the pressure for unity has fallen. The Radical Socialists (who are neither radical nor Socialist) and the Socialists have reopened their quarrel over free enterprise versus a planned economy, and both parties have clashed with the Popular Republicans on the century-old religious issue. Throughout the past year, cabinets have risen and fallen, just as in pre-war days, but the old familiar faces have not changed. It is evident that the politicians, determined at all costs to stay in office, are up to their old exasperating game.

Worst of all, as the U. S. State Department soon learned, the French are still thinking of foreign policy in pre-war terms. To them the menace is not Moscow, armed to the teeth and greedy for conquest, but a Germany ravaged, broken and prostrate under the heel of her conquerors. Only with the greatest difficulty were the French dissuaded from the insane project of dividing Germany into a score of eighteenth-century principalities. Checked here, checked, too, in their plan to internationalize the Ruhr under French control, they turned only two weeks ago to the Saar and practically appropriated that prosperous province. It mattered little to them that this ill-timed grab weakened the Western case against the Russian-supported Polish steal of Silesia, or that it mortally endangered the fledgling Western European Union. Whatever the consequences, Germany must be kept poor and helpless.

Despite all this, France may yet save her soul. She may save her soul in spite of herself, in somewhat the same fashion that the United States, not much more than two years ago, saved her soul. Just as Stalin, by his brutal rape of Czechoslovakia, helped the doubters in Congress to approve the Marshall Plan, so the open war which the Cominform has now declared on the Atlantic Pact may rouse the French to their peril and force them to see the postwar world as it really is. Stalin failed to prevent the economic recovery of France. If he fails now to stop her rearmament, he knows that his Hitler-like ambition to dominate the European continent must be indefinitely postponed. Hence the traitorous campaign of sabotage which the French Communists have now launched against the Republic.

The next few weeks may decide the fate of France. There will be strikes and riots. There may be bloodshed. The ports of France, through which arms must come from America, from which they must flow to Indo-China, will be battlegrounds. Before the grim struggle is over, the country may be rocked to its foundations. But out of the travail may come a France purified and strong, again certain of herself and prepared, if need be, to fight again for the freedom she loves.



## **"So let your light shine . . ."**

In this issue AMERICA has assembled four articles all dealing with a common theme: the *duty* Catholics have of trying to share the treasures of our holy faith with our non-Catholic neighbors and associates. That we all have such a duty is inescapably true. A Catholic simply has to be apostolic. He cannot keep his religion to himself. When he sees people around him in spiritual misery, he is obliged to *do what he can* to help them. This obligation comes from the teaching regarding the first and second spiritual works of mercy, "to instruct the ignorant" and "to counsel the doubtful."

"To do what he can." The easiest thing in the world for a Catholic to do is to decide early in life that he cannot do anything—except pray for his non-Catholic neighbors and give them good example. That is a lot. But it isn't enough. Ignorance and doubts are not ordinarily dispelled by prayers alone, or by good example alone. They are dispelled by knowledge and counsel.

Everybody understands the "difficulties" Catholics face in discharging this duty. It so happens that the first of these articles we accepted was John Cleary's "The uninformed good Catholic." Mr. Cleary's insight is penetrating. "Every Catholic, informed or uninformed," he writes, "knows that to please God it is not necessary to know much; all that is necessary is to love much." That's true enough for some, maybe for most, Catholics, and up to a point.

But then Helen Trafalgar sent in her charming piece on "How I became a convinced Catholic." Now Miss Trafalgar's personal experience, which she sets forth in very telling fashion, proves that in her case it *was* necessary "to know much." Otherwise how could she have stood her ground against the "needling" of five close business associates all during the war years? In addition, she seems to have taught them a great deal about the Catholic religion.

Then, just as we were making up this issue—Divine Providence, as you see, put it together for you—in came David Vincent Sheehan's very persuasive essay, "It's easier to carp than to cooperate," carrying an emphasis still more in contrast to Mr. Cleary's position. Mr. Sheehan's point is that the Catholic laity leave the apostolate too much to priests. You'll have to admit that he makes out a very good case for a more apostolic laity.

"My debate with Mr. Blanshard" by AMERICA's Editor-in-Chief, our fourth article, deals with a somewhat different apostolate. Nevertheless, at least indirectly, it involves the laity. As Rev. John LaFarge, S.J., remarked in his "Catholic impact: 1949-1950" (AM. 1/7, pp. 410-412), "We need to state the unchanging truths of our faith in the language of the times. . . . No occasion is better than when attack is leveled against us." If very few laymen will ever be called upon to debate a Blanshard in public, many of them will be called upon to meet his objections in private.

Everyone would admit that Catholicism is a very complex system of religious and ethical truths, of sacramental and other spiritual ministrations, and of ecclesiastical

organization. Yet the obligation to help others to appreciate Christ's religion implies some obligation to increase our information about it. We cannot teach what we ourselves do not understand.

The most obvious way of increasing our stock of information about Catholicism is to read about it, discuss it and make inquiries of people who know more than we do. This is the way to learn about medicine, for example, a field in which many laymen seem to have acquired a fairly satisfactory working knowledge. We can, if we try, round out what we have learned in school and at church. The facilities offered by the new Catholic information centers which have sprung up in many dioceses should make it comparatively easy for more of us to become well-informed, "convinced" Catholics, able to help our non-Catholic neighbors. We shall be blessed if we do.

## **Coal settlement**

For the first time in many a dreary moon the press carried pictures of a smiling John L. Lewis. Mr. Lewis, who is affable enough in private, could well afford to drop momentarily the pose of frowning hauteur which for business purposes he habitually assumes. After an unprecedented battle of wits and naked economic power, the leader of the United Mine Workers had marked up another victory over the nation's coal operators. Though not so clean-cut as other triumphs, it was won against greater obstacles than he has encountered in a long time.

To reach his goal, Mr. Lewis had to break the fourth-round pattern established in the steel dispute. With the demand for coal declining, he had to struggle against adverse economic winds. He carried into the negotiations the memory of successful Government injunctions under the Taft-Hartley Act and heavy fines for bucking the courts. He found, too, a united front among the operators—forged apparently by the big steel interests which control the "captive" mines—such as had never been seen before in the anarchic coal industry. The public, including many a labor leader, was almost solidly against him.

Yet he won. The contract he signed on Sunday, March 5, is a very good one for UMW. The miners' basic wage is hiked seventy cents a day from \$14.05 to \$14.75. Instead of twenty cents a ton, the operators agreed to pay thirty cents into the United Mine Workers' welfare and retirement fund. Since a soft-coal miner produces seven tons a day on the average, that means another seventy cents a day for the fund per miner. All welfare payments which were withheld by the operators during the "recent unpleasantness" must be paid by March 15. Mr. Lewis keeps control of the fund. He also keeps his union shop, but only "to the extent . . . permitted by law."

To obtain these benefits, Mr. Lewis had to make important concessions. He had to give up his demand for a seven-hour day. (The miners now work eight hours but travel time from the portal of the mine to the place of actual operations is included.) The mine leader was also forced to accept a restriction on the "memorial-period" clause of the 1948 agreement. Under this clause he was

able to stop production, in memory of the victims of mine disasters, as often and for as long as he wished. Now these memorial periods are restricted to a maximum of five days a year. The most important concession, however, was the surrender of the famous "able and willing" clause in the old contract. Under this provision, the miners were obliged to work under the contract only when they were "able and willing" to work. Mr. Lewis was free, in other words, to control production.

The doughty mine leader, who may well retire after this signal success, also won another victory of sorts—or at least so he believes. "This struggle," he told reporters after the contract had been signed, "demonstrated that the Taft-Hartley law and legislation of that type is no answer to free collective bargaining in free America." Mr. Lewis may be crowing too soon, but a good many labor-relations experts are inclined to agree with him. Said Senator Ives (R., N. Y.) to his colleagues on the eve of the settlement:

If this tragic experience has taught us one thing above all others, it has demonstrated the utter futility of attempting to formulate sound and equitable labor-relations legislation when, in its formulation, partisan politics is a major factor.

Readers may remember that this Review has on several occasions emphasized the same fundamental point.

As for the future of labor relations in the coal industry, there is no room for complacency. So long as the miners work only 200 days a year—that explains the need for a high daily wage rate—the country can expect trouble. Through the "able and willing" clause, Mr. Lewis controlled production and thus spread the work—and the misery. In addition to being poor economics, that solution was obnoxious to democratic principles. It is just as well that Mr. Lewis had to surrender the "able and willing" clause. The problem it was intended to solve remains, however. Until it is licked, there will be no lasting peace in the coal fields.

## The Road to Nowhere

A physician has sent us a paper-covered edition of John T. Flynn's book *The Road Ahead*. He probably got a mailing from the Committee for Constitutional Government, according to official report the second most expensive lobby in Washington (cf p. 682, this issue).

Its mailing of February 9, for example—"TO ALL DENTISTS—A CALL FOR ACTION NOW!" urged the immediate distribution of five enclosed postcards entitled "If You Want To Stop Socialism In U.S.A." If You Want To Stop Socialism (most good people do) you will buy, preferably in bulk orders, John T. Flynn's book at the "special February-March introductory price of 50c per copy on orders of two or more" from the Committee for Constitutional Government. Hundreds of doctors

... have purchased as many as twenty-five, fifty, and one hundred copies; some 5,000 in all. One Indiana surgeon bought 1,100 copies. ... The Oregon State Medical Association purchased 8,000 copies for distribution to individuals across the State. ...

*The Road Ahead*, a book whose significance has been

compared to the written Word of God, has a chapter on "The 'Kingdom of God'" (inner quotes are Mr. Flynn's, presumably as evidence of his sense of irony). Protesting (too much) that "this is not an attack on religion or on any organized church," he sets himself to expose

the organization of a clique of Christian ministers and laymen to poison the minds of the Christian churches in America with the principles of radical socialism.

Mr. Flynn fearlessly supplies immediate identification of this portentous camarilla. It is the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America—described five pages further on in the same book as "the greatest religious lay body in America"—an organization of twenty-five Protestant denominations, representing 142,354 local congregations with a membership of 27 million.

Mr. Flynn disapproves—to use a euphemism—of the pronouncements of the Council on social and economic questions. He *really* disapproves of the effrontery of any religious group in impugning the sanctity of the uncontrolled capitalism he advocates. His explicit indictment is tamer and slicker than that, of course. The Federal Council is beguiling simple pious Protestants into socialism. Mr. Flynn documents his case—in part by a quotation from the Council's "Social Creed of the Churches" that is simply not in the document. The author of *The Road Ahead* courteously acknowledges in a footnote that he took the non-existent quotation from a book by Carl McIntire, the unfrocked Presbyterian minister, a promoter of the superfundamentalist "American Council of Christian Churches," who went to Amsterdam to steal the headlines from the First Assembly of the World Council of Churches and to Bangkok to disrupt the International Missionary Council Conference.

Such fervid advocacy is pure Blanshardism. There is the same pretense of impressive documentation, the same astute selectivity of sources, the same ill-concealed resentment of any expression of the social role of religion. Dr. Samuel McCrea Cavert, general secretary of the Council, is prepared to supply on request (address: 297 Fourth Avenue, New York City, 10) a detailed answer to the "misunderstandings, misrepresentations and falsities" in Mr. Flynn's chapter. Dr. Cavert's conviction that Mr. Flynn's background unfits him to write "about a field with which he is wholly unfamiliar" should serve as a caution to Protestants gulled by Paul Blanshard's seeming knowledge of Catholicism.

Mr. Flynn's genial lumping together of England and Russia as equally socialist, his insistence that we must stop spending money on "What we are told is a 'cold war,'" manifests a mentality confidently awaiting word of McKinley's election. Mr. Flynn is hardly to be thanked that he strangely omitted quotations from Catholic sources on economic and social problems of the day. Perhaps he anticipated the judgment, say, of the Reverend George G. Higgins, Assistant Director of NCWC's Social Action Department, who tagged *The Road Ahead* as "the most emotional, illogical, inaccurate and probably even libelous book which we have ever been foolish enough to purchase."

# My debate with Mr. Blanshard

**Robert C. Hartnett, S.J.**

WHEN JERRY DAVIDOFF, chairman of the program committee of the Yale Law School Student Association, invited me to debate Paul Blanshard at New Haven on February 21, my reactions were mixed. I finally decided to accept the invitation, although I felt I could use my time more profitably than by engaging in a debate which struck me as like answering complaints for the telephone company.

Mr. Blanshard's complaints against American Catholicism, as set forth in his *American Freedom and Catholic Power*, are captious and endless. A worth-while book could be written about the impact of Catholicism on American democracy. But Mr. Blanshard could not write it.

## WHAT IS "AMERICANISM"?

Such an analysis would require, first of all, a careful study of what "Americanism" is. To assume, as Mr. Blanshard does, that it is what a Jewish writer, David Rome, in the July, 1949 issue of the *Congress Bulletin* (Montreal) called a "semi-Protestant, semi-atheistic" ideology, clarifies nothing.

American society, from a religious point of view, represents the most complex juxtaposition of diverse groupings in the whole wide world. Strict Methodists, for example, regard the use of alcoholic beverages and even the use of tobacco as sinful. They spearheaded the successful movement to write their moral beliefs into the United States Constitution in the form of the Eighteenth Amendment. Strict Presbyterians, supported by allies from other sects, interpret the commandment to "keep holy the Sabbath Day" very rigorously. They have written "blue laws" into State legislation and local ordinances. One could multiply examples of such doctrinal peculiarities and of such successful drives to legislate morals according to sectarian beliefs. Why should Catholics be labeled "un-American" when they attempt to fashion laws according to their moral code, but Methodists, Presbyterians, Baptists and Lutherans be regarded as good "Americans" when they do the same? It's all part of "The American Way."

There are also about 5 million Jews in the United States. Everyone knows how they have been mobilized in support of an American foreign policy friendly to Israel. Mr. Blanshard voices no criticism of this attempt to "interfere" in politics.

The argument that all the non-Catholic sects in the United States operate "democratically," whereas the Catholic Church operates "hierarchically," is simply not in accord with the facts. All highly organized institutions, including political parties and our American governments (State, local and Federal) operate mostly from

Misconceptions regarding Catholic teaching and its impact on American democracy usually spring from lack of information. Sometimes, however, they are deliberately spread. How can we make the truth clear? In this article AMERICA's Editor-in-Chief reports his effort to place the facts before the students of Yale in a debate with Paul Blanshard.

above. Certainly business corporations, professional organizations (like the AMA and the NAM), labor unions, farm federations and the hosts of pressure groups operate mostly from the center outwards.

Mr. Blanshard has completely distorted the truth about what American society is when he begins by assuming that its religious and moral beliefs are identical with those of his own amorphous Unitarianism. He further grossly distorts it when he singles out the Catholic Church for scrutiny and fails to compare its "political" influence with that of other religious bodies and especially with that of economic pressure groups. Under such circumstances, anyone who debates against him has to overcome not only his misunderstanding of Catholicism but his misunderstanding of Americanism as well—two misunderstandings shared, more or less, by the audience.

## BLANSHARD'S DEBATING TECHNIQUE

As a debater, Mr. Blanshard has several advantages he lacks as a writer. In the first place, he can draw on the arsenal of argumentation that went into his book. Secondly, since he has a fluent and pleasing address, he can make it appear that he is well-intentioned, sincere and respectful towards Catholicism. The opposite is much more obvious in his book. He can use satirical quips more tellingly as a speaker than as a writer. Lastly, the brevity of a twenty-five-minute oral presentation on both sides stands in his favor. By making sweeping assumptions which are untrue, by distorting Catholic doctrine, by suggesting much more than he actually says, he can throw the terms of the debate into great confusion. This initial confusion, shared by his ill-informed audience, lays an almost insuperable burden upon whoever is facing him for the first time and trying to straighten out the mess in twenty-five minutes. "Re-educating" the Germans over a period of five years has been child's play compared to trying to re-educate an audience in twenty-five minutes.

The substance of his presentation is not particularly impressive to a well-informed Catholic. He charges, first, that the *organization* of the Catholic Church is essentially authoritarian and even dictatorial. (This is really his whole thesis and he builds it up without letting theological accuracy cramp his style in the least.) Next he charges that the Catholic Church in America has never accepted the principle of "separation of Church and State." Here he assumes, of course, that such "separation" must be *absolute* under our Constitution. It is not very hard to prove that American Catholics gladly accept our *genuine* tradition of "separation," but this still leaves unanswered the assumption that our *genuine* tradition requires *absolute* "separation."



Then he carries these charges into the field of *education* by insisting that American Catholics—always under orders from “the Vatican,” of course—are trying to “dip their hands into the public treasury” to get *public* support of *sectarian* education. If he would honestly state exactly what Catholics want by way of Federal aid, and *why* they believe they are entitled to it, his objection would largely answer itself. Instead of that, he leaves his opponent with the entire burden of putting the issues back into focus after he has caricatured them to suit his purpose. “Public support” means paying teachers’ salaries and all other “current expenditures,” something we are *not* asking. But Mr. Blanshard’s technique is to create the confusion and dump it into your lap.

His fourth charge is that the Catholic hierarchy throttles *freedom of thought* among Catholics, and even to some extent among non-Catholics. This applies to the Legion of Decency and similar types of “censorship.” He cites the action of the National Catholic Welfare Conference in condemning compulsory health insurance. This charge is open to rather easy refutation. The most powerful “gag” on free expression of opinion in the field of health insurance is applied by the American Medical Association to nearly all American doctors, as the editor of *AMERICA* happens to know.

Then he launches into an attack on the Catholic doctrine and regulation of the institution of *marriage*. He purports to be “alarmed” that the hierarchy—he has the hierarchy on the brain—has set up an entire system of matrimonial courts in competition with and “at variance” with the civil courts the American people have set up to deal with the marriage contract. “Annulments”—a term he applies to the declaration of invalidity of “marriages” of Catholics which, in Church law, were never valid in the first place—naturally give him a field day.

Finally, he gives the hoary charge of a conflict between religion and science a “new look” by dressing it up in terms of birth-control and therapeutic abortion. Before audiences whose thinking on morals is at best woolly, the Blanshard appeal to human self-indulgence rings the bell every time.

#### HOW CAN YOU HIT HIS PITCHES?

Debating an opponent like Paul Blanshard is like facing for the first time a baseball hurler with what they call a “butterfly” pitch. The ball he throws floats all over the place and seems to defy the ordinary laws of physics. It requires a little experience with such an opponent to find out what to strike at and what to let pass. Here are a few very tentative impressions I gathered about facing this style of debating before a courteous but inevitably difficult audience, whose reaction is what counts.

1. Such an audience gets listless if you present a sustained argument. It seems as if what we call the “reasoning process” had recently become a Roman Catholic idiosyncrasy.

2. My impression—which could certainly be wrong—is that my audience at Yale was not particularly interested in a discussion of what “democracy” means, or

how “freedom of religion” or “freedom of association” is imperiled by the emphasis Blanshard places on conformity to majoritarian *mores* as the standard of his “Americanism.” Americans who feel that they enjoy the security of belonging to an ideological majority seem to be losing their sensitivity to the danger points of freedom. American Catholics, on the other hand, have a growing realization of what it means to be a beleaguered minority whose rights are at the mercy of a majority. We have not only our domestic experience to alert us, but the experience of our fellow Catholics behind the Iron Curtain. American Jews are similarly alerted. American Negroes, of course, are experts in this field.

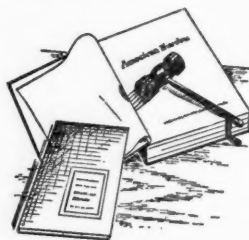
3. Father George H. Dunne told me that the quotations he read from the article of David Rome, a Montreal Jew, in criticism of Blanshard’s book proved very effective in his debate with Mr. Blanshard at Harvard Law School. At Yale I thought they fell flat. Here again the subjective feelings of the audience largely conditioned the importance they attached to evidence.

4. What seems to count with such an audience—perhaps I should say with such a young audience—is naturally what appeals to their personal convenience. When Mr. Blanshard whooped it up for birth-control as an “American right” he drew a round of heavy applause.

The students gave no indication that they had given the subject the kind of sober thought which Walter Lippmann gave it in his *Preface to Morals*. Contraceptives provide a convenient way of divorcing sexual indulgence from any related responsibilities. Whatever implies restraint, obligation or responsibility is likely to be unpopular.

5. On a rather superficial level, and within the framework of their limited perspectives, an audience like my Yale friends represents, however, the virtues of American fair play, fairmindedness and courtesy at their best. They will applaud your pointed thrusts. They like sharp “hit-and-run” rejoinders. They like sincerity, and they will not withhold their applause from you if (in their opinion) you score against your opponent. For example, to Mr. Blanshard’s sweeping charge that Catholics can get annulments “for fifteen dollars” I replied (emphasizing every word): “If Catholics can get annulments for fifteen dollars, *why didn’t Jimmy Walker get one?*” They applauded. When I interrupted my argument at one point to exclaim “I didn’t come up here to win a debate; I don’t care whether or not I win the debate; I came up here *to say a few things*,” they again generously applauded. They want you to take pot shots at your opponent.

6. Quite possibly they were much more interested than I was aware in statements towards which they displayed no obvious emotional reaction. Evidence that this may be true was given in the intelligent and courteous questions—mostly addressed to me—during the discussion period.





This would certainly be true of *some* members of the audience, the more thoughtful and reserved ones.

#### IS IT WORTH WHILE?

Inevitably, whoever debates Mr. Blanshard will be asked, "Do you think it was worth while?" Let me put the answer this way:

I would not care to debate him before a public audience made up, at least in part, of typical forum-goers. But when a specialized group, particularly of students in a non-Catholic college or of members of a non-Catholic religious body, wants to hear Mr. Blanshard anyway, I think he should be confronted.

The experience is not pleasant, any more than missionary work in any hostile environment is pleasant. But we have to realize that many millions of American non-Catholics are living in a dense fog of moral and religious unbelief. The schooling they get, instead of dissipating this fog, only thickens it. They have developed a deeply imbedded allergy to "authority," most of all in whatever pertains to religious and moral "opinions."

How can a Catholic gain entry into the precincts where so many millions of our fellow-citizens inhale an air of hostility to Catholicism? Only by way of replying to such charges as Mr. Blanshard has made articulate. Someone

has to come forward to warn them that the "religion of democracy" of which Paul Blanshard is an apostle is itself a direct assault on genuine religious liberty. Someone has to prove to them that people just as intelligent and well-educated as they are still take the teachings of Christ seriously. Otherwise, on what grounds can they be enabled to take a critical attitude towards the widely prevalent misconceptions of which Mr. Blanshard has become the spokesman? If we meet him toe-to-toe his crusade may even boomerang in our favor.

Let me add this one important proviso, however. Mr. Blanshard should be made to face a Catholic who has met him before. Otherwise he always enjoys the advantage of a seasoned pugilist meeting a perhaps capable but inexperienced opponent. It might be better if he had to face properly qualified Catholic laymen.

Finally, I realize fully that a contrary judgment could be made about the wisdom of engaging in what *Time* magazine for March 6 called "Indian warfare" of this type. Much depends on the temper of a given locality. Only competent authorities in each diocese can judge such questions. My personal feeling is that we might gain a lot by pitting professionals (priests or knowledgeable laymen) against an amateur whose confusion about Catholicism—and Americanism—is at times ludicrous.

## It's easier to carp than to cooperate

David Vincent Sheehan

A NON-CATHOLIC FRIEND, whose interest in the Church is evinced by friendly curiosity rather than intellectual hunger, was fascinated by the smudge on our foreheads when we returned from Mass on Ash Wednesday. We explained, patiently but gladly, that it wasn't dirt, it was ashes—to remind us of the dust of mortal man, and that to it we must return. The priest put it there, as he did every Ash Wednesday. From the pulpit they announced it as the "distribution of ashes."

She gave a shudder and asked, "Whose ashes?"

I started to explain that they really didn't *belong* to anybody, unless it was the parish, with the pastor as custodian, but were a sacramental available to all the faithful, when suddenly it struck me with all the subtlety of a thunderbolt that she didn't mean who *owned* the ashes. She meant whose *were* they!

My head reeled at the morbid possibilities that must have been flitting through her head. St. Francis Xavier? She had read of his arm. Some long-dead Bishop of Rochester? Possibly a walled-up nun of terrific and odorous sanctity? The possibilities were limitless.

My friend accepted the hurried explanation as an anticlimax, but seemed quite in sympathy with the symbolism and expressed interest in the ritual used.

*What about the role of the laity in spreading the beauty of Catholic truth? Are we as alert to opportunity as we should be? Mr. Sheehan, who recently resigned his executive post with Sheehan's department store in Elmira, N. Y., to "write for the greater honor and glory of God," shows how such opportunities can be missed—or successfully seized.*

But it set me thinking. And most of the thinking, eventually, was along lines far removed from the immediate sphere of her electrifying inquiry. It went something like this.

Here was a normal, intelligent girl who associated with Catholics almost daily. She was not only exposed to, but eager for, any information that might be given her in regard to things Catholic. She had never conversed with a priest, and probably would have been considerably reticent if she had, but she had moved freely and at perfect ease among the Catholic *laity*. Yet she was capable of entertaining the most gruesomely titillating conjectures about a simple public act of our faith.

After digesting that unpleasant realization, I began to remember how often we hear criticism leveled by Catholics at individual members of the clergy. Usually not serious or malicious criticism, thank God, but the stinging, mosquito-bite type that swells up out of all proportion to its cause.

Father So-and-So never preaches about everyday problems; it's always money, or the encyclicals. Father What's-his-name is pro-labor and anti-employer. Wouldn't you think he'd stick to the Gospel? Monsignor Purple *never* gives the time of day to those of other faiths; he's

death on the Conference of Christians and Jews, you know. How does he ever expect to gain converts that way? Or, I heard that Father Secundus married this couple (she's a divorcée) after Father Primus slammed his rectory door in their faces. And on and on *ad infinitum* and, in my opinion, *ad nauseam*.

But what about us of the laity, members of that great lay apostolate that is supposed to be the shining hope and strong support of the cruelly beleaguered Mother Church? When do we sit down, you and I, over a bottle of beer on the kitchen table or a cup of coffee on the canasta score, and lay *ourselves* out for what we don't do for the greater honor and glory of God and the spiritual edification of others? How many times have we committed the act that gave scandal, or omitted the act that would have brought grace, in the presence of our non-Catholic friends and neighbors who were watching and listening to a *recognized member of the Catholic Church*?

Oh, but that's different! I realize *we* should be careful, too, and try to spread the truth by example; but it's part of the *priests'* job to influence people outside of the faith. Maybe they need a public-relations man in each parish to see that the truth is reported fashionably, but it's their job to round up the strays.

Undoubtedly it is. And in the arid wastes of Africa, or among the pre-Christian mystics of Jamshedpur, or in any of the hundreds of mission areas in the world today, there are priests burning out their lives to bring the pearl of great price to the unbelieving and the indifferent. But here at home, our very numbers, in the great urban parishes and the sparsely shepherded rural areas, consume more than their share of the pastors' apostolic energy. Confessions, novenas, sick calls, sodalities, scout troops, missions, convert classes, diocesan extra-curriculars and a multitude of other obligations (including the financial worries of the average business man) pretty effectively remove the parish priest from the realm of social Catholic Action amongst our friends and neighbors. Further, proselyting by a Roman-collared clergyman, no matter how genial, amongst our separation-conscious non-Catholic citizenry would hardly be received with naive pleasure.

I would consider my own self a *well-intentioned* member of the lay apostolate. (Most damning of faint praise!) Still I blush with shame to recall the discouraging number of times I left a word unsaid, met the wrath of unenlightened bigotry with an answer more feeble than soft, or jealously concealed the beauties of the mystery of our faith in response to the crude and churlish inquiry of one from without.

I recall a particular instance—a minor one, but so was Paul's canter to Damascus—of slamming a door on an inquiry. I was sitting in the peace of our yard on a quiet summer evening, setting my missal for the next day's Mass. A neighbor strolled over, a thoroughly admirable girl, affiliated by heritage with a Protestant denomination. She was intrigued by my missal, by its purposeful order and devotional efficiency, the scriptural beauty of the English translation, arranged in chaste columns alongside the canonical mystery of the Latin. I started with

the Ordinary, and then went on to explain the use of the Proper and the Common, flipping the pages back and forth expertly with those colorful long ribbons. She was engrossed. Then suddenly she said: "That's very interesting. You know, I went to a Mass with a friend of mine once. But I thought it was awfully dull. This priest just stood up there all decked out, with his back to us, *mumbling*—"

God forgive me, but that did it. I closed the missal, unreasonably hurt, and with some inadequate phrase I changed the subject. But I was very tactful; I didn't cut her off. It would never do to let a nice neighbor know that I was *sensitive* about the beautiful liturgy of my faith. And to this day I can remember the hungry expression of her face just before I slammed the door.

Another time the results were happier, despite my temporizing. We had a young girl living with us to help my wife with the children. One of twelve children born of a mixed marriage, she had never been baptized. At the time she came to us she was fervently if informally associated with one of the stricter Baptist sects in town, and was more or less in the beginnings of an innocent courtship with a candidate for the ministry in the same sect. She confessed to us, privately, that she did not feel comfortable in their doctrine, nor did she see much love of God in the more Puritanical of their many social prohibitions. But they were very kind to her, and she *did* want to be baptized.

The girl mentioned to my wife one day her dissatisfaction with much of their creed, and hinted a longing for something more substantial. My wife asked her if she had ever investigated the Catholic faith. No, the girl replied, she hadn't—perhaps some day she should.

We were almost content, for the time being, to leave the process right there, adding only a few words of encouragement. We thought it best not to rush her, but to wait for the psychological moment to fan the embers of her interest into a more ardent desire. But my sister, fresh from a Manhattanville retreat, was horrified at our complacency. The way for the girl to find out if she was interested, she pointedly remarked, was to see a priest and start exploring. And it was up to us to make the arrangements—but quick.

Just two days ago that girl was baptized, and we placed our trembling hands on her shoulder as the waters of salvation flowed over her forehead. Yesterday morning, with her soul in her eyes, she received her first Holy Communion. And today, four precious weeks before she expected it, she was inducted into the Women's Air Force and leaves for basic training in Texas tomorrow.

Had we, with our nice sense of propriety, waited for the "psychological moment," she would now be in the midst of the fascinating secularism of the Army, still unbaptized.

What choice morsels of fat for back-fence chewing those two incidents would have provoked had some over-worked priest been involved! I can hear them now, in scandalized whispers laced with smug reproach: "She was asking him about the missal, and Father Repello got mad at something she said and walked right away

from her. Imagine!" Or, "This friend of my wife's wanted to take instructions, and Father Credo didn't think she ought to rush into it. *Rush into it*, he said! Would you believe it?"

Ah, but there's no one to talk about *me*, to uncurl the accusing finger from around a cup of tea and point *me* out. I am only of the laity—the Catholic laity—one who is the constant cynosure of all the eyes in Gaza, watching my every move, weighing my every word. Why should I be held responsible for accepting or rejecting the graces of conversion which God might see fit to channel through me?

Every day of the year, we of the Catholic laity are as conspicuous as the holy ashes that annually bless our foreheads—and yet we would hide. Keep the peace. Don't say anything that would offend anyone, or make for an uncomfortable situation. Don't parade your religion; it's so ostentatious. After all, you can't go around being

## The uninformed good Catholic

John Cleary

OLDSTERS OF TODAY who enjoyed the privilege of making a retreat under Father Pardow may remember that famous Jesuit preacher's story of the earnest, inquiring soul who had studied most of the major Catholic doctrines one by one, and had found them acceptable. But he could not bring himself to the point of entering the Church, because, he said, "I can't swallow the Pope."

Father Pardow assured the good man that there was no need for him to do such violence to himself, and then proceeded, in his inimitable way, to show him that belief in the Pope and his spiritual powers is every bit as reasonable as any one of the many doctrines he had already accepted as God's teaching.

It was nearly fifty years ago that, as a Catholic high-school boy in Philadelphia, I heard Father Pardow tell the tale during a retreat for the public in St. John's Church, opposite Wanamaker's. It later developed for me a new angle, which has grown clearer and sharper over the years.

The younger generation might call my postscript to this story a "tagline" or "sockline" or "stinger." Yet, no irreverence is intended when I suggest that the eloquent retreat master's non-Catholic friend would have had less difficulty in "swallowing the Pope," in fact, he would have digested all the other doctrines of the Church much more quickly and completely if, instead of saving the Pope for dessert or cordial after his doctrinal meal, he had taken the Holy Father as aperitif or cocktail or appetizer.

I make this suggestion because an essential *first* in Catholic dogma is the doctrine of the papacy's authority

*different* all the time from your very pleasant Protestant friends and exceedingly affluent business associates. Leave the evangelizing to the priests—and then some night over a bottle of beer we'll review their efforts and see how they're doing. Just in the discreet intimacy of our own little group, of course.

Then, at the end of this little nightmare of introspection, my mind returned to the original question. Whose ashes? Whose ashes am I carrying around on this proud, jealous brow that was once signed with the chrism of salvation and became the temple of the Holy Ghost? Whose ashes mar this sacrosanct being, too proud to be mocked and too much in love to share it with his neighbor?

The answer is simple, and it's the one I should have given to myself, if not repeated aloud. Whose ashes? Lord have mercy on me, a sinner—they're my own.

*In the following two articles, two more of the laity are heard from. John Cleary, treasurer of the Public Federal Savings and Loan Assn., Philadelphia, speaks of the Catholic who can't defend his faith because he doesn't know its theology. Helen Trafalgar (pen name of an Eastern business woman) tells how attacks by non-Catholics taught her to value and explain her faith.*

in the teaching organization Our Lord left behind Him to carry on His work in the world—the teaching organization we know as His Church. Once convinced that God has safeguarded His Church against the teaching of error, through the infallibility of the Pope and the infallibility of the Church, the seeker after truth will naturally and easily accept the specific doctrines which add up to the full teaching of Christ. What the Church teaches is true; it is guaranteed by God to be true.

Perhaps here is the root reason why the average Catholic feels secure in a Church whose doctrines he may not clearly know, much less understand to the point of being able to explain or defend them.

The sad truth is that most of us Catholics do *not* know our religion as we should. Our ignorance is a reflection on ourselves, however, not on our religion. God knows, we have had ample opportunity, beginning with childhood, to learn it in all its glorious beauty of detail. There would seem to be no excuse for this ignorance, and I offer none.

I do, however, advance an explanation. I believe there is a reason, other than indifference, why a man can be a good Catholic, a devout Catholic, a Catholic who would die for his religion, and yet be unable to define the Church's teaching in a way to convince anyone of its God-given authenticity—unable to answer objections or criticisms of this or that specific dogma or practice of the Church.

Usually, when a Catholic makes a resolution that from now on he will be a better Catholic, he does not mean that he will be a better-informed Catholic. He means he



will be a better-living Catholic, on the principle that goodness, or devotion, is not a matter of learning but a manner of living. He means he is going to practise his religion more intensely. He is going to worship God more fervently by doing with greater devotion the things he must do to remain within the fold of the Church and by taking fuller advantage of the countless helps to virtue, to grace, to salvation, to be found in the Catholic Church and nowhere else. He is going to pray oftener and with greater fervor. He will try to go to Mass every day instead of only on Sundays. He will go to confession and Holy Communion more frequently, visit the Most Blessed Sacrament more often, attend extra devotions in church, observe more carefully the commandments of God and the Church, and so on.

Every Catholic, informed or uninformed, knows that to please God it is not necessary to know much; all that is required is to love Him much. "Catholic," meaning "universal," includes not only the highly educated, who know and understand all the answers, but also the least educated, who don't even know the questions. "What doth it profit thee to dispute deeply about the Trinity, if thou be lacking in humility and thus displeasing to the Trinity?" asks Thomas à Kempis in the opening chapter of the *Following of Christ*.

Yet, in every move that a good Catholic makes to remain a good Catholic and to become a better Catholic, doctrines and practices of the Church are involved—doctrines and practices that he takes for granted.

The average Catholic in these parts did study Catholic doctrine in his school days, but usually he does not continue those studies after leaving school or college, though the Church wishes him to do so. Were he called upon oftener by outsiders to explain the teaching of the Church, the chances are that he would continue the study he stopped when leaving school. You would be surprised to know how infrequently such questions are put to lay people. Americans just don't seem to be interested in religion. Although the people I have been associated with in business during the last forty years have been preponderantly non-Catholic, I cannot think of a single time when I have been asked to explain my religion or to defend it. The few requests I get for information are from friends seeking enlightenment about a holy day, the meaning of the Immaculate Conception, fish on Friday, the exercises and regulations of Lent, or the election of the Pope, when that event was in the news. It makes a fellow feel that he will be judged as a Catholic, not by what he knows, but by how he lives.

At any rate, the average Catholic, not called upon to display his knowledge of his religion, takes Catholic dogma and practice for granted, just as he takes for granted the mechanism of his automobile. All he needs to know about his car, he feels, is that if he keeps it oiled and greased, has gas in the tank and air in the tires, it will take him where he wants to go and back again, sitting down. He is not concerned about the 5,530 individual parts—3,924 in the chassis and 1,606 in the body—or the principles of ignition, carburetion and transmission, or how all these things are coordinated into

an effective means of transportation. So long as the co-ordination is there, and it works, that's all he's concerned about.

Perhaps the good Catholic who is not too well informed about his religion can be better compared to the average American, who does not know as he should the Constitution and Bill of Rights and the history of his country. He learned all these things in school, but although the results of his study have become a part of his nature as a citizen, he would have as much difficulty in passing a test on government as the average Catholic would have in passing a test on his religion. That analogy, too, is less than perfect. We must go to the Bible for an apt illustration of the principle evoked in my attempt to interpret the uninformed good Catholic. In St. Luke's Gospel (10:25) we read:

And behold, a certain lawyer got up to test him, saying, "Master, what must I do to gain eternal life?" But he said to him, "What is written in the law? How dost thou read?" He answered and said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole strength, and with thy whole mind; and thy neighbor as thyself." And he said to him, "Thou hast answered rightly; do this and thou shalt live."

Does Our Lord mean that we can ignore all the other commandments? No. He means that, in observing the commandment of the love of God and our neighbor, we shall be observing all the other commandments. In obeying any of the other commandments, we are obeying the commandment to love God and neighbor, which is basic, fundamental and all-embracing. The "shalts" and "shalt-nots" of the other commandments form the shadow of the positive command to love, which is the substance of the law.

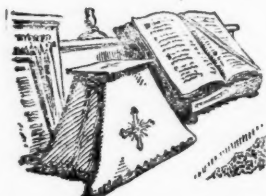
Some such process as that—whether conscious or unconscious or subconscious—may serve to explain the seeming paradox of a Catholic who does not know the details of his religion as he should, but would die rather than deny a single tenet of that religion.

He believes that God became man to redeem us; that He left a teaching Church to carry on the work of salvation; that, in the teaching of the hierarchy of bishops and the Pope, He safeguards that Church against error until the end of the world.

He knows there is proof for every single doctrine and practice of the Church, even though he may not be able to furnish that proof.

His inability to demonstrate the truth of a doctrine does not dismay him, nor create doubt in his mind. Ten thousand difficulties in regard to his faith would not add up to a single doubt.

The fact that a doctrine is part of the teaching of the infallible Church established by Christ is sufficient for him. He believes it because the Church teaches it. And he makes profession of that belief every time he recites the short Act of Faith, which I would recommend for





the meditation of anyone outside the fold who cannot understand the supreme, unshakable confidence we Catholics have that our Church is the true Church established by Christ.

O my God, I firmly believe all the sacred truths which the Holy Catholic Church teaches, because Thou hast revealed them, who canst neither deceive nor be deceived. Amen.

I could wish for such a one no greater joy and comfort and solace and peace of soul than the possession of the right to recite with us, in all sincerity and conviction, that affirmation made even by uninformed Catholics.

## How I became a convinced Catholic

*Helen Trafalgar*

THIS SHOULD REALLY BE a letter of thanks—a bread-and-butter note to friends whose efforts have brought about my recent “conversion” to the Catholic faith. Being Protestants, however, my friends would scarcely welcome such a note.

Born almost thirty years ago of devout Catholic parents, I was baptized at the early age of two weeks, and from that time on I was at least outwardly a Catholic.

When I was a small child my family settled in a lovely New England town, redolent of Revolutionary days. The streets burrowed their way beneath the arched arms of ancient elms; the inn where Washington supposedly slept turned a deliberately quaint face to the roaring automobiles, and elective town offices had always been held by “good Yankee stock.”

My family was not of “good Yankee stock.” We boast no Mayflower ancestor, no English background, no Protestant tradition. We were not, therefore, of the socially elect. I grew up in an atmosphere of grudging tolerance, gradually becoming aware that by nationality and religion I was “different.” I could not eat meat on Friday; I could not sleep sound and late on Sunday mornings; I could not, with other neighborhood children, attend Sunday school or the parties that followed, and I must conform to the barbarous custom of confession.

Being a Catholic, I found, was not so rigid a bar to social acceptance as having a murderer for an uncle; nor was it so slight a drawback as a piratical ancestor, who might conceivably become a conversational *pièce de résistance* as the bohemian strain in an otherwise respectable family. Being a Catholic was a sort of in-between obstacle—an unfortunate connection that might be excused if it were not allowed to intrude into daily living, but one that could not wholeheartedly be forgiven.

As an adolescent, I took the easy way. I learned my penny Catechism by rote, I attended Mass, I received Communion; but otherwise I conveniently forgot that I

was a Catholic. I was not ashamed of being a Catholic, or so I told myself, but it seemed faintly discreditable, like a family skeleton that might be expected to rattle at the most embarrassing moment.

My parents remained devout and sincere Catholics, but as I grew older even they could not help me. They had had few educational opportunities. They could not answer my questions about the Catholic faith. They accepted with complete trust those doctrines of the Church that they could not fully explain. Their faith was for them both a bulwark and a consolation. But it was no consolation to me. Unable to find the explanations I sought, I began to look upon religion as mere pietistic sentimentality without a sound foundation.

My laxity in religious matters was evident to my parents. Though hurt by my indifference, they were powerless to combat it themselves. They took the next best step: much against my will they enrolled me at a small Catholic college—I had wanted to join my non-Catholic friends at a “name” college.

This was shock treatment. Without warning I was plunged into a deeply religious atmosphere such as I had not known existed. Here, highly educated, capable nuns not only believed implicitly the tenets of the Catholic faith, but acted upon them from principle rather than sentimentality.

Here, too, a devoted chaplain began our religion course with such provocative questions as, “Is there a God? If so, prove it.” And he proceeded to do just that, with arguments that appealed to the intellect rather than to the emotions. He made no flowery, impassioned sermons. He used sense instead of sensibility, sentiment instead of sentimentality.

Under the chaplain’s direction I became a convinced Catholic, happy in my new-found faith, secure in the knowledge that I was a Catholic from conviction, and not from any “funny inner feelings.” But it is about a critical test period in my life after leaving college that I wish to speak.

After taking my degree, I secured a position with a large industrial firm in a town near my home. In this firm, I discovered later, the key personnel were intentionally chosen from Protestants. “Others” were not welcome. The labor shortage of the war years forced the relaxing of the unwritten (but strict) rule, however, and I was one of the few Catholics employed.

Because of the confidential nature of the work my department was a small compact group—six girls—who worked together intimately. It was mostly from these girls of different denominations that I began to piece together a real idea of the Protestant attitude towards Catholics. Two of the girls were Sunday-school teachers who had taken courses at a nearby Bible Institute and thereby constituted themselves arbiters of religious, ethical and moral questions. A third admitted casually that she attended church because she liked to sing in the choir; another was interested only in skiing and baseball; the fifth girl was one whose parents had left their Catholic faith, their Polish name and their native language in Europe when they emigrated to America. She professed

allegiance to a Protestant denomination, where she attended church services faithfully every Easter Sunday.

Within the framework of divergent religious opinions these five girls were united by one bond—aversion to anything Catholic. Their attitudes ranged from insolently superior amusement to unreasoning prejudice based on profound ignorance or twisted half-truths.

Religious discussions were frequent in the group, mostly owing to the zeal of the two Sunday-school teachers. Much as I would have preferred to remain apart from these discussions, I found myself drawn into them by the insinuations of the girls. Their antipathy for Catholicism was never revealed openly—they were too well bred for that. Sometimes it showed itself in an unconscious train of thought, the slight nuance given a sentence, the maddening flick of the light lash of innuendo.

This infuriating little tap of insult that shakes the nerves by its steady drop-of-water persistence forced me to concentrate my attention on the truths of my faith. I could no longer be the casual Catholic who never remembers her religion till she is in a hole; I would not be the prudent Catholic, timidly practising a religion I was afraid to defend publicly.

By questioning my faith, my Protestant comrades gave life to the phrases I had once learned by rote. Under fire, the doctrines of the Church assumed a new importance.

What astounded me most about my questioners, I think, was their bland conviction that they were familiar with the tenets of the Catholic faith. Actually, their wild assumptions betrayed an amazing degree of ignorance. Their first accusations were, of course, the old ones about lack of freedom and independence within the Catholic Church; submission to an "outdated" code of ethics; the authoritarian character of the Church; the hierarchy, ceremonies, dogma; the Church's "picayune" preoccupation with philosophical definitions.

I could not at first believe that such complete ignorance was not feigned. The exercise of a little common sense, the most casual reading, should, it seemed to me, have answered at least some of these accusations. But their ignorance was not spurious. When I mentioned such men as Belloc, Waugh, and others whose independence of thought and action cannot be doubted, the girls were surprised. When I pointed out that freedom is mere license unless it is an ordered, reasoned liberty, guided by unassailable first principles, they became attentive but unconvinced. When I admitted that the Church is dogmatic in matters of faith and morals, that its authority is not the authority of force, but a moral authority binding alike the Pope and the humblest Catholic, my friends showed that this was all new to them. When I declared that the Church's preoccupation with doctrinal definitions, far from being picayune, is the only way to keep the truth one, whole, unchanging and unchangeable, they were clearly astonished.

Apparently, it had never occurred to any of these girls that a Catholic *could* have reasonable justification for his beliefs. To them the incense, the statues and the unfamiliar vestments were the tattered remnants of an outworn superstition inconsistent with the "scientific" spirit

of this modern day. Some of the girls, from time to time, attended the Catholic weddings and funerals of friends. Invariably they returned to work with the discovery that "all Catholic churches are not alike, as Catholics like to claim." They told me eagerly about the different colors of the vestments (white for weddings, black for funerals), the incomprehensible singsong between priest and choir, the architectural differences of the church buildings, the bad statues and gaudy interior decorations of some churches, as opposed to the dignified simplicity of others.

The unity of the Catholic Church, like its apostolicity, was apparently quite a sore point with the girls. They were somewhat abashed when I explained that the Catholic faith is not a mere matter of the color of vestments, bad statues or architectural styles. The Church does not teach esthetics; it teaches the science and art of the love of God.

As our conversations extended over a longer and longer period of time, it became plain to me that our



whole concepts of life were poles apart. Against the girls' demand for a "modern" Church that would change with the times, I would picture a Church that would change the times. In answer to their contention

that our marriage laws should admit at least one divorce per person (their objection was to several divorces in rapid succession rather than to divorce itself) I would propose an intensive study of the phrase "Whom God hath joined together let no man put asunder." To their oft-recurring objection that some Catholics are tepid, indifferent, even evil, I would reply that there was once a traitorous apostle. I could also point out that the Catholic Church is the only one which has produced saints. I might even add that the best method of learning about the Church's doctrines is not from those who have abandoned them.

I dare not hope that my explanations, brief as they necessarily were, convinced these friends of mine. Their prejudice against the Church, resting on historic controversies about which they knew few facts but felt much bitterness, was too deep-rooted for quick extermination. If they now recognize that the Catholic faith is not a mere mass of superstition and mysterious incantations, but rather a reasonable, sane philosophy of life, then I am content. Where there is sanity there is hope.

For myself, these Protestant girls have done much more. They have forced me to test the strength of my convictions. Through their heckling I rediscovered, reaffirmed the reasons for belief. I chose the hard, black bread of dogma that sustains life, rather than the cream-puff softness of ideologies that lead only to spiritual anemia. I cling to the faith that is not only a matter of a few prayers, but a complete culture embracing every aspect of life.

For all this, I thank my Protestant friends. They showed me the long road home.

## What is this realism? IV

Harold C. Gardiner

"THERE IS STILL ANOTHER HEIGHT that idealistic realism must scale. It is the height of charity."

That was the challenge and the promise with which I left you in the last installment of this study of the differences that seem to me to exist between realism that is naturalistic and realism that is idealistic. And if it be true, as the burden of these thoughts has been at pains to make clear, that our Catholic contemporary authors are idealistic in their realism, then it will follow that those same authors, in so far as they approach greatness, will scale that height of charity, just as they have attained the lesser peaks of hope.

How, then, is charity involved in the work of our Catholic authors?

It finds its place first imbedded, as it were, in the very subject matter. The *thing* talked about in Mauriac, Bernanos, Greene, Waugh, Undset, Sullivan, to take some scattered examples from various national literatures, is a *thing* that is deserving of love. And what is that thing? It is generally the moral law and its application, violation of it, adherence to it, in all the variations with which in the concrete human nature faces the fact of its existence. Above that, and on a plane essentially higher, the thing talked about is not merely the moral law, but the fact of supernatural elevation. Here the same variations may be portrayed—the fact of the supernatural may be blinked by the characters in the story, or they may embrace it with slack or fervent arms, but the *fact* will be there, and as long as it is there, it is deserving of love, and as long as the author keeps the fact there—no matter how his characters may react to it—he has involved charity in his subject matter. That is to say, the author sees as he writes that the moral and the supernatural are things to be loved, and as we read we will likely catch a glimpse of the same truth.

Moral and supernatural values are in themselves lovable—however irksome and stringent at times the demands they may make on us. And this, I believe, is what Graham Greene says in the person of poor old Scobie. Please, once again may I repeat that I am not trying to make Scobie the man of the half-century, as I have been charged with doing? I simply keep coming back to him because I know that he is a very pat example on which to hang these attempts to clarify the issue. Furthermore, he did start the whole present controversy.

Well, then, Graham Greene knows (in his writing, at least; I know nothing of him as a man) that the moral and supernatural values about which Scobie was agonizing are values that are lovable. And Scobie knew it too, though he was most bewilderingly caught up in the mere onerousness of their demands. But if he had not at the

## LITERATURE AND ARTS

same time dimly realized that they are deserving of love, why did he struggle to sustain their demands before he fell?

Charity, then, is at the base of idealistic realism. This point is frequently overlooked simply because of the fact that most contemporary Catholic authors are somewhat laconic about it. It is a fact that they assume, perhaps all unconsciously. They do not state it, their characters rarely state it. As Mr. Neville Braybrooke writes (*Blackfriars*, Feb., 1950, "Catholics and the Novel"), referring to the ending of *The Heart of the Matter*:

[This] is an example of the way in which Greene has brought to perfection a conflict without resolving the problem in terms of mortal and venial sins, but rather leaving such a judgment to the Omnipotent, his task as author being merely to present the crisis in human terms. Furthermore, it is this precise refusal to pass judgment on their characters which has caused a charge to be made in Catholic circles that novels such as that of Greene cause scandal.

And it is precisely because that particular problem is presented in *human terms*, in the terms of humanity as the idealist sees it—and as the naturalist cannot see it—that it will involve the realization that the elements of the problem are lovable, are rooted in charity and constitute a motive for charity.

But in a perhaps even more obvious way charity enters into the equipment of the idealistic realist. That is in his relationship to his own characters, the people of his own creation.

Perhaps this truth may be illuminated a little by its opposite. It has been pointed out in these columns on not a few occasions (and I'm happy to say that the same charge is being made increasingly in circles where it has long been desiderated) that very many naturalistic authors give the impression that they have nothing but a sniggering contempt for the children of their own artistic travail. Sinclair Lewis, back in the days when he could write, was neither artistically nor morally at fault in drawing his Babbitts and his Ganttrys. He was artistically and perhaps even morally at fault in his own attitude to them. They were not for him living souls, but rather specimens for his microscope and scalpel. One had the impression, as I wrote in reviewing *The God Seeker* (AM. 3/26/40), that one "was not sharing an experience, but watching an experiment."

Now this, I hold, is to prostitute the whole concept of artistic creation. After all, the only reason why the human



artist can "create" anything lies fundamentally in the fact that he himself was truly created. His gift of "making" is but a dim reflection and imitation of God's creative power. Now, God does not create anything to hate or despise it or be indifferent to it. In so far as the artist makes anything just to turn it into the object of his scorn or indifference, he is denying his birthright.

This strange coldness towards the characters in their own stories can be traced, I hold, in all of the naturalistic school. It is a blight that has plagued Lewis, Farrell, O'Hara, Caldwell and others among our American practitioners; it is a blight that now infests the proponents of Existentialism. It is blight that never touched those who are deeply humanist, much less those motivated by the idealism of which we are speaking. I don't know that I could ever prove it—perhaps some dissertation may some day attempt it—but I do believe that a rather fascinating study could be made to prove that Shakespeare loved Iago. It might be worth a thesis, at that.

It is, of course, true that sympathy for his characters may bog the author down in sentimentality, in an excessive emotionalism that will result in condonation of the characters' wrongdoing. But there is, nevertheless, a mean between the cynicism of the naturalist and the sentimentality of the emotionalist, and this is the mean to which the Catholic realist by and large adheres. The marital vagaries of Julia in *Brideshead Revisited*, the self-deception about her own charitableness of Brigitte Pian in *A Woman of the Pharisees* are never diluted with any pale wash of "oh, the poor things just could not help themselves, you see." Neither, on the other hand, are Julia or Brigitte despised or condemned in the ruthless probing of their hidden motives. They are appreciated, and that means that they are seen for what they are. And what they are is human beings, who may be weak and variable, stubborn in evil or restless to shake it off, but still possessed of the dignity that crowns them by the mere fact that they are human beings. In other words, they are objects of love.

What often enough obscures the fact that the Catholic realist treats his characters with charity is that a man like Waugh, for example, writes with a satirical bent. But even a Mr. Joyboy (in *The Loved One*) is not a creature despised by his author. That is because an effective satirist is not a cynic. He is rather a moralist, and the moralist must be motivated by love for the delinquent whose foibles he castigates.

In these two ways, then, if in no others, the Catholic realist will be dealing with the stuff of charity. This admirable traffic, to be sure, is not the sole possession of Catholic novelists. It is part of the equipment of any realist who does not exclude human (moral and spiritual) ideals. You have but to recall such authors as Willa Cather in all her works, Alan Paton in his *Cry, the Beloved Country*, John Hersey in his current *The Wall* to realize how charity is woven into the very fabric of literature that is truly human.

These thoughts, however, have narrowed the consideration to Catholic authors, because my aim has been to show that the charge of realism leveled against our con-

temporary Catholic novelists by no means affixes a stigma on them.

There is realism and realism. The kind that ponders, perhaps unobtrusively and by implication, the truth that human nature and the values that can motivate it are hope-inspiring and love-generating, is a realism that is sound and Christian.

Perhaps all my sound and fury can all be boiled down to a provocative statement by Mr. Braybrooke in the *Blackfriars* article mentioned above:

Novel writing is essentially, when seen in a broad perspective, a quest whose aim is to come face to face with Him in whose image all men are made. Properly understood in this context, there can be no such thing as secular literature.

It is impossible to discover that reflection in naturalist writers. It may be difficult to trace its neat application in some sane realists. It is fairly easy to see the truth of it shining through the work of contemporary Catholic realists.

### *Book of Generations*

(Reflections of a priest-professor)

This were a hapless hour  
Did God not let me see  
This measure of His maidens  
In continuity—

The radiance of Mary  
That stars the dusk of Eve,  
From Sara down to Bernadette,  
Through Joan and Genevieve;

Till in this royal offspring  
Of queens and martyrs bred,  
Again there springeth virgins,  
And widowed saints, and wed.

Nor formula nor thesis  
May daunt me or dismay  
As will the eyes of Cecily  
Beneath a brown beret;

And not a tongue is nimble,  
And not a brow is knit,  
But I am spalled by Bridget  
Or charmed with Catherine's wit;

And some will be all April  
And some be winter-shard,  
For one may weep with Rachel  
Or joy with Hildegarde.

So, from God's generations,  
His goodly and His fair  
Will pause the merest moment—  
And leave me brimmed with prayer.

SISTER MARY IMMACULATA, C.S.J.



## Negro world twice viewed

### SOUTHERN LEGACY

By Hodding Carter. Louisiana State U. Press. 186p. \$3

Pulitzer-prize *Southern Legacy* serves you a literary feast, a set of first-class stories, a host of shrewd observations, contagious optimism, and plenty of humorous chunks under the chin dealt to self-satisfied, pompous backwoods politicians and anxious local Chambers of Commerce. The main components of the latter-day South are laid right in your lap, from the ladies (God bless 'em) to the sullen tow-heads of the hills. Mr. Carter knows men, and knows the best that is in men, whether they be white or colored, rich or poor, Catholic or Protestant.

I enjoy his writing so much, and credit him with so much real goodness and wisdom, that I feel, as it were, embarrassed when I watch him stumbling around trying to find a definite point on which to take a conclusive stand. He has sense enough to crave such a point, but tries to reconcile too many opposites ever to attain it.

Mr. Carter plants his alpenstock down firmly on the slow-moving glacier of racial segregation, declaring:

The analytical observer may ridicule the inconsistencies and detest the human tragedies inherent in this uncompromising bracketing by race; but neither mockery nor protest nor legislation can, in the ascertainable future, change the white South's conviction that racial separateness at the mass levels of personal contact is the only acceptable way by which large segments of two dissimilar peoples can live side by side in peace.

I have great respect for Hodding Carter's powers of observation, but I wonder how far he has been looking at the reality, and not at his own preconceived ideas. I hope he will pardon me for jotting down a few notes on the margin of the passage above.

1. Other things than "mockery, protest or legislation" can change convictions. Education and common sense can alter views, and an increasing awareness of the fact that "colored people" in the U.S., like it or not, form a conscious part of the majority non-white population of a much troubled and rapidly changing world. To none of these is compulsory segregation (and Mr. Carter, for all his kindly language, is talking compulsion) "acceptable." To whom, incidentally, is it acceptable, and how far today is the liberal and progressive South so universally convinced that it can never be relaxed? Plenty of intelligent Southerners, who are not radical, seem to be speaking in quite a different key.

2. Says Mr. Carter:

Segregation is essentially the product of the Southern male's determination that, except for the illicit and decreasingly condoned relationship of white man and Negro woman, the two races shall not be joined (p. 87, italics mine).

But the author has made it abundantly plain that the reason why they can never be joined is not any question of sex repulsion or sex incompatibility. The reason is precisely what everybody knows it to be: the desire to preserve a traditional master-servant relationship. This he indicates in plain language (p. 89): "The determining point is simply that in the inescapable meeting of the races the superior-inferior status must be maintained."

It is, therefore, not a question of sex, but a matter of status; and, as Gunnar Myrdal so clearly noted in his *American Dilemma*, all the fixed convictions in the world cannot keep the educated Negro from growing out of the servant status.



3. Is there any reasonable basis for maintaining such a position? Of course not, exclaims Mr. Carter: "The mistake these [non-Southern] questioners make, of course, is to insist upon rationality in the most irrational area of human behavior."

Yet as we read, he provides a "reason," which is not just irrational "sex," but the idea of maintaining a fixed social and economic status. Unless Ole Man Logic died last summer, it would seem that the status itself—the reason for the unreason!—must also be unreason.

4. Reflects Mr. Carter, and even more challengingly (p. 90):

It is inescapably true that together with our uniform insistence upon racial separateness, we have consistently denied to the Negro the most precious intangible which man possesses. That is self-respect.

This is nobly uttered, and I am sure the author means it. But nothing is a flatter blow to even elementary self-respect than to be told to submit to taboos enforcing a "superior-inferior" status, regardless of any personal

## BOOKS

achievement, qualification, or merit before God or man. If in some other social order that were to happen to Mr. Carter, would he feel his self-respect disturbed? I'll wager my eyeteeth he would.

The Negroes of Savannah, Georgia, he says, with negligible exceptions, are completely happy in their segregated existence. Savannah is an old seaport town, and a lot better than many other places in the South. One reason may be that there are many Catholics there. Yet some very cautious and humble Savannah Negroes I have known seemed to entertain a quite different idea from that proposed by Hodding Carter. Even if it is the delightful place that he depicts, who is going to stay parked all the time in one town? Jim Crow hits you most when you start to move. Does Mr. Carter never like to take a trip out of Greenville, Mississippi?

"It is not that we [in the South] must be let alone," says the author in conclusion, "but that we must not be set apart as an incomprehensible, stubborn contradiction." To which I say, Amen, and hail all that Editor Carter has written and will write to clear away misconceptions about the South. But if he doesn't want the rest of us to see any contradictions, it would be good policy for him to stop contradicting himself. He has too much good to contribute to afford crippling his own work.

JOHN LAFARGE

### STRANGER AND ALONE

By J. Saunders Redding. Harcourt, Brace. 308p. \$3

In Saunders Redding's new novel about race, nothing *physical* happens to his Negro protagonist. The leading character endures his ration of contumely in encounters with white men but he is allowed to think of himself as successful. He has a "responsible" job and a comfortable home, which nobody threatens to burn down. He is not tarred, beaten or lynched. His women-folk are not violated. Instead, he is in process of losing his soul.

It is the spiritual degradation of Shelton Howden, a light-skinned Negro educator, which not only furnishes the author's theme but makes his race story intrinsically more terrible than more violent excursions into the same problem.

Mr. Redding is himself a distinguished educator and a Negro. There

may even be a little self-reproach in his indictment. That would be difficult to judge. At any rate he has written a brutal, frequently coarse and thoroughly materialistic study of a little known facet of the race problem and, within his indicated limits, has shown extraordinary candor and balance.

In this novel the white world exists only as a sort of atmospheric pressure, felt rather than seen. The occasional oafish, domineering figure is intruded for contrast, usually to show the effect on Negro leaders—to demonstrate how assured and sophisticated men on their own ground are suddenly turned to stammering, wheedling suppliants in the presence of the ruling group.

Indeed, if Mr. Redding has any villain, other than the system, it is Shelton's Negro mentor, who surely and inevitably corrupts his pupil.

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Dr. Perkins T. Wimbush, an imperfectly realized but ironic portrait, is the "model" president of a "model" State college for Negroes somewhere in the South. "Ole Pee Tee" looks like a white man and has made himself a strange and treasonable home between both worlds. He is sardonic, intelligent and wholly venal, ruling his own like a Creole grandee, yet turning into a self-avowed "white man's nigger" in the presence of Dixiecrat politicians.

One of the virtues of this novel is that it shows the forces which soften Shelton Howden, making him ripe for corruption in the Wimbush pattern. For Shelton has been victimized not only by the world of his unknown white father but by the black chauvinism of his ebony brethren.

The gradations and divisions of the Negro world are little realized by the rest of us, even by those who approach the problem with good will. Perhaps the final indignity we heap on our Negro brethren is to regard them as a monolithic mass. Of course, it is Mr. Redding's thesis that some white politicians well realize that the Negro world is caste-ridden and confused and use the light-colored Negro with cool calculation as an instrument in the suppression of the rest.

Perhaps it has happened that way in America. It is a well-known pattern in the British West Indies, but whether the Dixiecrat has been capable of such subtlety in his dealings with "the nigger" is an open question. Mr. Redding's novel exposes the whole gradualist school among his own race to the suspicion that they have been so used. Whether the pattern is deliberate or accidental, it is an ugly one. Every minority group has its own version of "old Pee Tee," and the type is no prettier on that account.

WALTER O'HEARN

### **God's plan in the missions**

#### **THE SALVATION OF THE NATIONS**

By Jean Daniélou, S.J. (Translated by Angeline Bouchard). Sheed & Ward. 118p. \$2

The positive, existential approach is enjoying a rebirth in present-day European theology and we find history again assuming the role it played in the thought of Augustine, Bonaventure and the Fathers in general. This fascinating little volume of Father Daniélou's is an example of this return to history for whatever light it may shed on a dogmatic problem—in this case, the problem of the missions. The aim of the work is the cultivation of a "genuine missionary spirituality" by a broadening and deepening of the missionary perspective" (p. vii). To this purpose

the author studies, from a viewpoint reminiscent of the *City of God* and the *Breviloquium*, the mystery of God's plan for the universe. For it is in human endeavor to accomplish the fulfillment of this plan that missionary activity consists.

The divine plan referred to is found to be the progressive revelation of the Word of God, the Second Person of the Trinity, to the minds of men. The first such revelation was that made to the pagan world—through the native powers of the human spirit; the second, to the Jewish people to whom the personal, unique and august nature of God was first made known. This preparation made possible the "last stage of revelation, to be found in Christ" (p. 26). Through Christ was revealed the triune nature, the intimate life, of God.

The mission of the Word involved His Incarnation and the consequent elevation of humanity to a participation in the divine nature. In the same way Christian mission activity, a prolongation of the mission of the Word, must render Christianity incarnate in the pagan peoples. Building on what is already true, rich and serviceable in their present civilization and religion, it must elevate them into a supernaturalized Christian—but not necessarily Western—civilization.

Bringing the light of faith thus to bear on history gives rise, in turn, to a theology of history, an interpretation of the course of events which reveals purposefulness and organization. As do Augustine and Bonaventure, Father Daniélou points out that history before Christ was a preparation for His coming. The era since His death is the Messianic, eschatological period, the ultimate divine purpose of which is to prepare—in a fashion comprehended only by the divine wisdom—for the second coming of Christ. An interpretation of certain passages in the *Acts of the Apostles* and the *Epistles of St. Paul* brings Father Daniélou to the conclusion that the great Apostle and the early Christians expected the second coming within their life-span. Yet the final coming has been delayed, and in the fact that the gospel has not as yet been preached to all nations is the explanation of this delay to be found. Hence the focus in which the modern Christian must place his missionary activity—the evangelization of all nations must be completed in cooperation with the evolution of God's plan so that Christ may "come to us in His fulness" (p. 84).

The present eschatological period is one in which the Holy Ghost plays the dominant role. All missionary activity must accordingly be accomplished in utter dependence on Him. The missionary spirit itself can be actuated in the individual by contemplation alone, since

only thus does man fill his heart with that love of God which yearns to make Him known and loved among every race and nation.

Father Daniélou's attempt to explain the present pagan state of so many peoples by an appeal to the "divine pedagogy" is oversimplified. There is no need to seek beyond Portuguese greed, for instance, a concrete cause of India's hostility to the faith, nor beyond Rome's rejection of the Chinese rites a reason for the heartbreaking collapse of Father Ricci's promising structure. Again, when the American Indian was lost to the faith, the cupidity of the *Conquistadores* was responsible, not the divine will which actually desires the salvation of every human being. These are but examples. The fault is in great part our own. We must humbly assume the blame and set about remedying the failures of the past.

The book is of value to any one to whom theological problems are of interest. In its interpretation of history it offers a Christian alternative to the dialectical materialism of Marx. It emphasizes the nearness of God to our world and the fact that He is operative in history toward working out infallibly His own plan for the universe. This is a truth which zealous Christians are apt to overlook. Consciousness of it gives a new aspect to their missionary endeavor. THOMAS A. MCGOVERN, S.J.

#### Catholic and scientist

LOUIS PASTEUR: Free Lance of Science

By René J. Dubos. Little, Brown. 418p. \$5

This is the story of a Catholic layman who is today recognized as one of the outstanding scientific leaders of all times. Although he was *not a medical man*, Pasteur's fundamental researches dealing with the relation of micro-organisms to disease brought order to the chaotic state of medicine in the nineteenth century and justify the statement: "When, in 1888, ill-health compelled him to abandon his tools, medical bacteriology and the sister sciences of immunology, public health and epidemiology had reached maturity, largely through his genius and devotion."

The author, now a member of the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research, is a Frenchman by birth. His background as an outstanding investigator in experimental medicine (especially in the study of bacteriology and anti-biotics) makes him uniquely suited to write this excellent biography.

The fascinating story of Pasteur's fine experiments, designed to show the fallacy of the many claims of "spontaneous generation," is told in an exciting manner. The author emphasizes,

however, that Pasteur did not prove the impossibility of spontaneous generation, nor did the great scientist ever make such a claim: "I do not pretend to establish that spontaneous generation does not occur. One cannot prove the

negative." He did show that all specific claims had no basis in fact and "he protested the assumption, for which no evidence is yet available, that spontaneous generation had been the origin of life in the universe."

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M. Dubos makes quite clear that Pasteur was always a Catholic in practice and by conviction. From other biographies of the great man, we know that on many occasions he avowed that should he discover endless new secrets of nature, he still would hold to the faith of a simple Breton peasant. The life of this eminent scientist who was at the same time a devout Catholic ("... he died ... one of his hands in that of his wife, the other holding a crucifix") gives the lie to those modern bigots who would have us believe that the teachings of the faith tend to smother scientific achievement by the faithful.

The book is extremely readable. It is well organized and thoroughly indexed, and a useful list of major events in Pasteur's life arranged in chronological order is appended. It should be read widely. **CHARLES G. WILBER**

### FUNDAMENTAL MORAL ATTITUDES

By Dietrich von Hildebrand. Longmans, Green. 72p. \$1.75

Jacques Maritain, apropos of one of Hildebrand's religious books, stated that the author had an admirable gift for humanizing things divine. The present work, the first of Hildebrand's purely philosophical works to appear in English, shows an admirable conformity between Hildebrand's ethical insights and the Christian ethos. This book marks a praiseworthy advance from many ethical treatises on several points. It is not excessively speculative in its form but reflects an orientation towards action in both form and content.

The book discusses, moreover, a field of moral activity too frequently neglected. A morality of ponderable acts is stressed in most ethical textbooks. A moral act is not an impersonal, historical moral "unit" with fixed weight and significance that is capable of transference from person to person. The temptation to treat it as such, however, is always present. The author avoids that. His subject is not acts but attitudes—permanent fundamental orientations of the spirit which form a moral background to one's life, and influence individual acts. The author takes full account of the continuity of the spiritual person on the moral level. These basic attitudes are given no quick, superficial treatment; to appreciate the depth and justness of the analysis demands thought from the reader, particularly since the author is often dealing with qualitative differences which can easily be lost if the author's phenomenology is not taken seriously.

Dr. Hildebrand considers in the present work the five fundamental attitudes

of reverence, faithfulness, awareness of responsibility, veracity and goodness. In discussing these there is evidenced his skill in laying bare the innermost fibers of motivation, in classifying ethical types that have characterized the other writings of Dr. Hildebrand. His analyses have, at times, a wholeness and an inevitability that mark them as definitive. **ROBERT W. GLEASON, S.J.**

### THE LABOR STORY

By Aleine Austin. Coward-McCann. 244p. \$2.50

This book comes modestly to market with the tag, "A Popular History of American Labor." It will please trade unionists, since the author is frankly and unapologetically pro-labor. Or rather, on second thought, it will please those trade unionists who are loyal members of the CIO. In all the dramatic events which led to the formation of the CIO, Miss Austin strongly takes sides—against the AFL.

The general public will be less enthusiastic about the book. That is a pity, because the general public, including the farmers, need a book of this kind. Ignorance of the labor movement—of its problems and struggles, its hopes and achievements—is fairly widespread. An indication of this is the popular belief, not confined to the uneducated, that a shallow columnist like Westbrook Pegler is an authority on organized labor. If the author had been more of a scholar and less of a partisan, she might have enlightened thousands of those who sit in anti-labor darkness. She has the clear, facile, easy-to-read style which a public fed on *Life* and *Collier's* demands of its writers. She knows how to organize material. She tells a swiftly-paced story and has an eye for the dramatic. But her outlook on life is so narrowly pro-labor that she only antagonizes those she aims to convert. That is why I must label *The Labor Story* a well-written failure. **BENJAMIN L. MASSE**

### THE ASSYRIAN AND OTHER STORIES

By William Saroyan. Harcourt, Brace. 276p. \$3.50

For a decade and a half the career of Mr. William Saroyan has been a matter of fairly wide public knowledge. His practically perfect (as he would be the first to admit) early short story, "The Daring Young Man on the Flying Trapeze," with its triumphant formlessness and bravado, sounded a new note in the literature of the depression. Mr. Saroyan promptly became, as he puts it in his amusing preface to this book, "a whiz in the short story game," turn-

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ing out stories and sketches in lavish and friendly fashion. Then he whizzed his way through a number of plays and two novels.

Now, after a six-year abstention from the form, he is back with a new collection of short stories. Here is the same old Saroyan, the master-builder of asides, the ardent sportsman of the random remark, the tracker-down of unconsidered trifles of gentleness and wry humor as fugitive as the Cheshire cat. In many of these stories he shows, as before, as mild a sense of the social weal as Little Orphan Annie. His characters certainly share Annie's contempt for money and her amazing flair for finding hidden stores of it; for the typical Saroyan person, like Annie, is a hardened materialist beneath his facile, cockeyed optimism. A writer in *The Cocktail Party* seems to be spokesman for the author when he says:

No man decides for himself who he is or who he is able to be, what he is to do, or how he is to do it. Every man belongs to matter, that's all. Matter is a large order, and every man is a small order. Matter happens to a man, and the man goes along for the ride, as the saying is.

The protagonist of the title story, an eighty-page affair, goes along for a ride of undisguised bitterness, seeking finally to become as "unalive, perfect" as the man on the trapeze.

But most of these stories are, in their author's somewhat contemptuous epithet for them, "safe." They were all written to make money, though only two of the eighteen, apparently, did. They are the custom-anecdote about boys, young men and writers; not one without its deftness of phrase or touch of insight. ("Do you love your wife?" the writer asked the man, and the man thought a moment and then said, 'We hate each other all the days and nights because it is so much trouble to live, but all the years we love each other.'") Technically the stories are relaxed; some display a new narrative skill. But today's Saroyan is a disillusioned, seriously angry man, and the old charm wears a bit thin now and again.

RILEY HUGHES

### ALBERT EINSTEIN

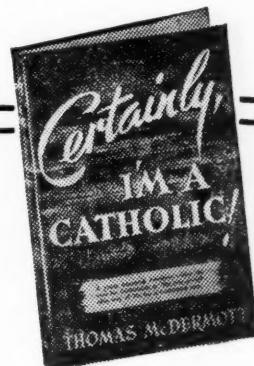
By Leopold Infeld. Scribner's. 132p. \$2

In this short volume Dr. Infeld attempts a logical presentation of the basis for Einstein's Special and General Theories of Relativity and shows their influence upon the scientific thought of the present day. As such, it is a competent piece of writing but, without some mathematical background and a very general understanding of the theories and structure of modern physics,



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the average reader may well find it mostly an interesting collection of ingenious illustrative examples and seeming paradoxes.

For more than a decade Dr. Infeld has collaborated with Einstein in a study of the special problems of Relativity Theory, but the picture which is presented of Dr. Einstein the man remains somewhat vague and indistinct. His passion for persistent study, his capacity for independent and constructive thought on the fundamental problems and concepts of physics and cosmology, his gentleness, good nature and personal magnetism are mentioned several times. It is, however, in the analysis of his works and their influence upon modern physics that Einstein is ably presented as a giant among theoretical physicists, and one who has had major influence on present-day thought.

In his historical presentation, Dr.

Infeld recounts in some detail the impact of the Special Theory of Relativity upon both the scientific and philosophical thought of the early twentieth century and also upon the general public. The shortcomings and limitations of classical Newtonian mechanics are clearly explained, and the methods indicated by which most of these are resolved in the Special Theory of Relativity. This Special Theory is more easily presented in its broad outlines by means of illustrative examples than is the General Theory and, as a result, this section is somewhat more easily understood after one or two readings.

Subtle difficulties still remained in the structure of physics even after the Special Theory and its implications were understood, though not necessarily accepted, by the theoretical physicists. Eight years of intense study following the publication of the Special Theory

were culminated by the publication of the General Theory of Relativity. This theory gives an explanation of many of the observable phenomena of the universe, but even it had limitations, principal among which were the separate theories on electromagnetic and gravitational fields. In an effort to remove these limitations a paper was published late in 1949 on generalized field theory, to attempt a unification of these separate field theories. Only time can tell how successful this endeavor will be.

I would recommend *Albert Einstein* as a good non-mathematical account of the Special and General Theories of Relativity. It ably presents these theories and effectively traces their influence on modern physics.

LOUIS W. TORDELLA

WALTER O'HEARN is a Canadian newspaperman now covering the meetings of the United Nations.

THOMAS A. MCGOVERN, S.J., is following his theological studies at Woodstock College, Md. CHARLES G. WILBUR is director of the biological laboratories at St. Louis University.

LOUIS W. TORDELLA is Scientific Research Administrator in the office of the Chief of Naval Operations.

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... And a great multitude followed Him, because they saw the miracles which He did on them that were diseased. . . . He said to Philip: Whence shall we buy bread that these may eat? And this He said to try him, for He Himself knew what He would do. Philip answered Him: Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them. . . .

"Joe."

"What, Dad?"

"I hope you are wiser than Philip."

The boyish eyes rounded in amazement. "Wiser than one of the apostles?"

"Yes. Wiser than he was then."

"I don't know what you mean, Dad."

Joe pushed his hands into his pockets.

I had put a hand on his shoulder.

"Joe, Philip had seen Our Lord working miracles."

"I know, Dad."

"The blind saw, the lame walked, the deaf heard, the dumb spoke—"

Joe looked up at me, and capsuled



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what I was saying. "You mean Philip should have known that Jesus was God."

I squeezed his shoulder, giving assent.

His voice lifted: "And when Jesus asked where to buy bread, Philip should have said, 'Lord, you work miracles. Why are you asking me what to do?'"

I was silent.

"Is that what you mean, Dad?"

I nodded. Then I drew him to the window to look at the sunset. "Joe. Every morning God wakes up the sun. Every evening He lays it to rest. He brings spring and summer, autumn and winter. He holds the earth in His hand, and spins it for us." I put my arm across his shoulder and pulled him closer. "Let me tell you a secret."

He was silent, and the red light from the sky glorified his face.

"Joe, sometimes I have worried." I said it as if I were confessing a sin.

He turned his head toward me. "You, Dad?"

"Yes. Sometimes I have fretted, wondering how in the world to feed and clothe you and the other children; and how to pay the doctor and the dentist. Sometimes I have been like Philip. I have looked at my empty checkbook and said, 'Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not enough for them.' And all the time I could have had a million dollars for the asking, if I had needed it."

Joe's voice ascended the scale of astonishment. "You could?"

"Joe, here's the secret. Every time—every time—I've discovered that if I really needed something, God gave it to me as soon as I asked Him. The crazy part of it is that often I worried and fretted first, before I remembered to pray."

Joe spoke off-handedly. "You mean you were like Philip. You talked about buying something, when all you had to do was ask God."

I touched the back of his head lightly with my hand. "That's it, Joe. That's it."

JOSEPH A. BREIG

## FILMS

**BLACK HAND.** According to MGM, slum-dwelling Italian-Americans at the turn of the century were held in the grip of a campaign of extortion and terror carried on by gangs of their fellow countrymen who used the name of the old country's dreaded secret society to ensure the docility and silence of their victims. This film describes the efforts of a few courageous individuals to end the reign of terror which was

paralyzing their newly immigrated neighbors and branding the whole Italian community as a lawless and ignorant element. Its heroes are a young law student (Gene Kelly), whose father was one of the gang's early victims, and a middle-aged detective (J. Carrol Naish) who has devoted years to the seemingly hopeless task of finding concrete evidence or a witness who could not be intimidated into silence. Though the tone of the picture is frankly melodramatic, it carries a good deal of conviction through scrupulous avoidance of mock-heroics. In addition, its characterizations are good and its projection of a time and a place has unusual flavor and integrity. The result is a somewhat grim but exciting and worthwhile *adult* film whose treatment of what is today fashionably called a minority problem is compassionate and constructive.

**MOTHER DIDN'T TELL ME.** The majority of disappointing films start out with a good story-idea handled with originality, and then either milk it dry in about two reels or abandon it and limp the rest of the way with the uncertain aid of a time-worn formula found lying around on the studio shelf. This rather soggy comedy is a good illustration. It describes the trials of an attractive and intelligent young lady (Dorothy McGuire) who marries her doctor (William Lundigan) and discovers that the home life of a physician is more limited and much less regular than if he were a clipper captain plying the Cape Horn route. The heroine's pre-nuptial stratagems for getting her man are amusingly set forth and so are her first encounters with the strange ways of the medical fraternity and the endless and unpredictable demands on her husband's time. What happens after that, however, is a series of contrived incidents having little connection with the problems of a doctor's wife and even less with reality and culminating in the inevitable, impulsive separation and reconciliation. Besides wasting an *adult* audience's time, the picture squanders the talents of a capable and engaging cast. (20th Century-Fox)

**PERFECT STRANGERS** is the story of a career girl (Ginger Rogers) separated from her husband, and an average family man (Dennis Morgan) who fall in love while serving on a locked-up jury. Eventually they decide to return to their respective mates. In the meantime, however, the outcome of the murder case they are judging is made to hinge on their convincing the other jurors that the fact that a married man is in love with his secretary is no sure sign that he is capable of pushing his wife off a cliff. The way the script is

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slanted, this sensible observation is overstated and distorted, somewhat in the manner of an old-fashioned, dramatized sociological tract, so that the idea which emerges is that being in love with someone other than one's wife is a normal and quite respectable state. Aside from this unbalanced viewpoint, the picture is a static and singularly unmoving American approximation of *Brief Encounter*, enlivened occasionally by some interesting insights into the workings of the jury system and some vivid supporting performances, Thelma Ritter's in particular. (Warner Brothers)

MOIRA WALSH

## PARADE

(SCENE: PROFESSORS FRANK Hunter and George Menton, classical scholars, sit chatting in Hunter's study.)

*Menton* (after conversation begins to lag): Frank, put on a record—something from antiquity.

*Hunter* (looking over the records): Have you heard this one—a discussion between Marcus Tullius Cicero and Julius Bassus?

*Menton*: I don't think I have.

*Hunter*: It seems to have taken place before some sort of public assembly. (He starts phonograph. The voices of Cicero and Bassus are heard in the study.)

*Bassus*: You have taught, most excellent Cicero, that the Roman Senate cannot make just any laws it pleases; that there is a higher law with which the Senate's legislation must be in harmony. Will you, sir, explain this to our audience?

*Cicero*: I will undertake to do so. First, my Bassus, from the order and beauty and other sources in the universe I infer the Creator of the universe, the one God.

*Bassus*: You hold, then, there is but one God?

*Cicero*: I do so hold. To continue: from the fitness and the relations of things displayed in the whole creation and in every part of it, I discern a law, which is the expression to mankind of the will of the Creator.

*Bassus*: This, then, is the higher law you allude to?

*Cicero*: It is, indeed. I call this the original law, the criterion of good and evil, of just and unjust. It is imprinted on the nature of things, as the rule by which all human laws are to be formed. When they deviate from this pattern they are not really laws but acts of force and tyranny.

*Bassus*: You would say, then, that no

Senate majority can abrogate this law?

*Cicero*: No Senate majority, not the unanimous Senate, not the whole people can abrogate or ignore this law. To imagine that the distinction between good and evil is to be found in custom, opinion or human institution, and not in nature, is mere folly and madness which would overthrow all human society.

*Bassus*: I understand you refer to this law as right reason.

*Cicero*: I do. This law is right reason, conformable to the nature of things. And, as I said, it cannot be overruled by any other law, nor can we be absolved from it either by the Senate or by the people. (The voices from the ancient world cease.)

*Hunter* (taking off record): How

Cicero soars above the men who control current legal thinking.

*Menton*: He does, indeed. Cicero recognized the natural law, whereas our legal leaders today do not. Frank, it's really frightening when you consider how widely the God-given, inalienable rights of man are forgotten nowadays, and how legislatures think they can make anything, good or evil, into a law.

*Hunter*: Another thing, George. Cicero did not have any divine revelation at his disposal. With many moderns it is different. They blind themselves before revelation.

*Menton*: Perhaps that's why their very reason is blinded—as a punishment for their attitude toward revelation. (The telephone rings. Hunter answers it.)

JOHN A. TOOMEY

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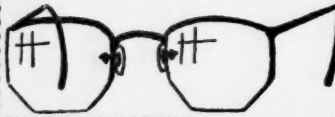
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## CORRESPONDENCE

### Health insurance

EDITOR: I am afraid your correspondent, John D. Kernan, M.D. (Am. 3/4/50), under the heading "Social Semantics," has attributed to me something I did not say and did not mean in my original Washington Front (Am. 12/24/49). I have looked up what I did say there, and I see that what I implied was not a defense of the health-insurance bills before Congress, but a defense of the principle of medical insurance, without any reference to any special bills. I merely meant to say that medicine is not necessarily socialized under such insurance, and that patients are "socialized" in a good sense: that is, their social interest is safeguarded.

WILFRID PARSONS, S.J.  
Washington, D. C.

### The Church and marriage

EDITOR: Congratulations on your very fine editorial (Am. 2/25/50) on the Bergman-Rossellini case, "A Valentine for UP and INS." The distinction made between a "natural" or legitimate marriage and a "sacramental" marriage should serve to clarify the Church's stand on a matter like this. Too many have been quick to attribute to Father Morlion statements which they have read in the American press. It is also appalling to find many who think that marriages contracted outside the Catholic Church are not valid.

RICHARD M. BRACKETT, S.J.  
Portland, Maine

### First things first

EDITOR: Your editorials on our foreign policy and the H-bomb (Am. 2/18) are to be warmly commended for the clear, cogent reasoning evidenced.

Our nation cannot cope with the onerous tasks confronting it by acting as if they did not exist. Nothing less is at stake than the preservation of our democratic system, and perhaps even our lives. Balanced budgets, however desirable in normal times, cannot be the norm of our actions.

Financial difficulties are to be preferred to moral and physical subjugation or physical extermination.

Chicago, Ill. JAMES E. REDDINGTON

### Spiritual medicine

EDITOR: This is my third year of reading your very interesting magazine, AMERICA. I enjoy every number, and I eagerly await each new issue.

I am also in my second year of reading your inspiring monthly, the *Catholic Mind*. Such literature is truly medicine for a man's character, body and soul. But I wonder how many are acquainted with it.  
Philadelphia, Pa. ROBERT J. LOMBARDI

### Demurrer

EDITOR: Judging from the review of my *Western World and Japan* in your issue of February 11, I seem to have given the impression that I am prejudiced against the Jesuit missionaries in Asia. I find this disturbing, because as a historian I strive to be free from bias, and I certainly tried to do full justice to the memory of St. Francis Xavier and the devoted men who followed him.

Your reviewer says that I made unfair charges against the Jesuits when I wrote that they were feared in Japan as agents of a temporal power that threatened national security. But I did not say that this fear was justified, nor do I think that it was justified. But it existed, and I recorded a historical fact for which there is ample evidence.

Your reviewer also chides me for giving the Portuguese and the Spanish a "going-over" and saying nothing of the misdeeds of the Dutch and the English. There are several passages in the book which notice the aggression of those two nations. It is true that I pay more attention to the activities of the Portuguese and the Spanish than to those of the Dutch and English; but that is because the first part of my study deals with Europeans in Asia up to the end of the sixteenth century, before the Dutch and English figured prominently.

Moreover, until 1639, the influence of the Dutch and the English in Japan was unimportant. I know of no evidence to justify the view that the misfortunes of the Catholic missions in Japan can be ascribed to the intrigues of the East India companies. (Will Adams, by the way, was not an agent of the English East India Company, which was formed after his death.) All one can say for certain is that, in rivalry for trade privileges, the Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch and English all cheerfully maligned one another to the Japanese.

Your reviewer asks why I do not mention Clive. It is because British policy in India is not relevant to the theme of my book. She says I do not mention the Opium War. But I do, and more than once; and there is even a full-page illustration of the British fleet about to sail for China, with a caption, "The Opium War."

I cannot object to a reviewer's opinion that erroneous conclusions may be drawn from my book as to the future of Christianity and democracy in Japan. I may be mistaken in my judgments. But I have not deliberately distorted historical facts, or omitted them for reasons other than irrelevance or lack of space.

New York, N. Y. G. B. SANSOM

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